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A Pastor's Recollections.

THE QUAINT COUPLE

AND

OTHER NARRATIVES.

Mrs. S. Kilner
from her affectionate
Mother in Law
E Kilner
May 5. 91

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE QUAINT COUPLE,

AND

OTHER NARRATIVES.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON, M.A.,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

"I have considered the days of old, and the years, that are past."
—Ps. lxxvii. 5.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
LEEDS: W. BRIERLEY, 2, BOND STREET.

1890.

ARG

THE following Sketches, from memory, of persons and events connected with a long ministry in the same district of a large manufacturing town, originally written and printed for the sake of those who formed the Pastor's charge—and some of them often reprinted—are now, to meet frequent requests, collected, and published again.

E. J.

LEEDS, *Dec.*, 1889.

THE QUAINT COUPLE.

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."—COL. iii. 16.

"WHAT did you say you wanted?" I asked, and so put my writing on one side, to have a fuller look at my visitors. They were a man and woman, both in advanced life. Let me first describe him. Imagine then, reader, a little old man, thin and wiry-looking, with a countenance wrinkled and puckered up, and strong, grizzled hair and whiskers. He was attired in an old-fashioned blue dress coat, with brass buttons, and very narrow tails; a yellowish waistcoat, and trousers that fitted so tight they looked like pantaloons; grey stockings, and particularly well-blacked shoes. To complete the figure, you must conceive him with a hat that scarcely covered his head, and yet both hat and clothes all as clean and evidently carefully brushed as they possibly could be, and you have JOHN PALLISTER before you.

And now for his companion, who by the manner she holds his arm must be a person in feeble health, and his wife. She ought to have been seen to be

fairly appreciated. Was there ever old age more sweet and peaceful! Like her husband, neat in the extreme, and clean beyond what our smoky atmosphere and dirty streets would seem to allow, her brown stuff dress, and her simple shawl the pattern of other days, her close black bonnet, and her snow-white muslin cap; but above all, her face so calm, so gentle, with her flaxen hair yet without the least tinge of grey, parted meekly over her forehead;—such was MARY PALLISTER: as dear and true in her inward character, as her outward appearance was signally prepossessing!

Mary answered my inquiry, not John;—and I at once understood who was the presiding genius of my two visitors. "We want to see if we can get a Hymn-book, Sir, such as are used in your church. We have had one lent when we have come, but we would like to have one of our own. We are very fond of Hymns." Of course this was easily answered, and while the person whose concern it was went for a Hymn-book, I invited the couple to sit, and asked them some questions. The information I received was to the effect, that they had only recently come to reside in the town, and that they had found their way to my church, where, though it was a considerable distance from their house, they wished to become regular attenders. By this time, the book was ready, and handed to the old man, who, however, on opening it and turning over the pages,

returned it with an air of disappointment. "It is not the kind he wants, Sir," said his wife; "John wants one with the music in it, and it must be a larger one than this, for he wants to play the tunes at home." John assented to this in a sort of bashful manner; and so a large Hymn-book was produced, which evidently was perfectly satisfactory. "What is the price?" asked Mary. I mentioned the amount, which though not large, considering the size of the book, was a much larger one than I thought, judging by the well-worn and oft mended appearance of John's clothing, the old people could afford to pay, and so I added: "But I shall be glad to make you a present of the Hymn-book."

Mary at once said, with great decision, "No, Sir, we do not wish to have it given; we came here to buy it; —John has the money in his pocket." Already her husband was supporting her words by bringing the silver from his trousers pocket, and putting it into my hands.

Then the book was taken by Mary, and carefully folded in a clean blue cotton handkerchief, drawn from John's pocket, and given to her husband with the injunction: "Take care thou does not drop it, John." And so my visitors departed. I had, however, as my readers would expect, obtained information as to their home, which I promised them soon to visit.

"He was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works."—1 KINGS vii. 14.

THE quarter of the town where the old couple lived is situated on a somewhat steep hill, necessitating of course a pretty strong effort for people like them to ascend. Here are a number of streets all built for working people, usually consisting of one dwelling room, or "house," as the lower apartment is called, and one bed-room above; these, with a cellar for storing coals, and the cellar-steps for the larder, completing the dwelling.

But there was this peculiarity about the house where our old friends lived, that it was in a little court, at the back of other houses which faced the street, the said little court or yard being fenced in on the opposite side by a lofty wooden paling, thus securing some amount of quiet and privacy: considerations which in the estimation of the worthy couple whom we are describing, were no trifling recommendation.

I entered the court, knocked at the door, and opened it, and found both my friends at home. Indeed they went out little, except to church, and I might frequently have gone, and not found them away.

And now, as I looked round I was constrained to acknowledge that the appearance of the home was worthy that of the old couple themselves. It was most scrupulously clean;—so clean, that as I used to say afterwards, it was quite worth while any one going

there to see how wondrously neat and comfortable the poor man's cottage can be made.

There was the large chest of mahogany drawers, from the well-rubbed front of which the fire was brightly reflected; there were chairs, and a table under the window; on the walls were some scripture prints, to which afterwards were added photographic portraits of some of their new church friends; in a corner of the room were book-shelves, with a fair supply of thickly-bound volumes; and opposite to the window there stood what evidently was a pianoforte, though different in its appearance to any other instrument of the kind I had ever seen.

As might be expected, I was heartily welcome. Mary was sitting in a tall box-like chair by the fire-side, John was toasting bread for the tea; and the cups and saucers were all ready on the table.

I must be seated, they both exclaimed. I should not at all interrupt them; and if I did stop their tea a little bit, what did that matter? Would I have a cup?

And then Mary said, "And I should like you, Sir, to hear John play; he has learnt ever so many of the tunes in the Hymn-book." John blushed, and said something about being "nought of a player where a player came;" and rather seemed to wish to avoid the exhibition of his abilities. But Mary was not to be denied, and so her husband had to put down his toasting-fork; making this compromise, however, that he "should nobbut play T'old Hundred now, not being quite at home with t'new tunes yet."

It certainly was a strange performance! The instrument was itself a most rare one; and it would be vain to describe the kind of harmony which John educed from it, as he thrummed with his old fingers on the keys, and worked duly through the well-known tune.

Mary listened with evidently great satisfaction, saying with more animation than her usual quiet manner exhibited, as John rose up to return to his bread toasting, "Ah, Sir, would you believe it? he made the piano himself only a year or two since, and he has since then learnt to play on it too, all by himself."

Yes: John was a wonderful genius. Not only was the piano his manufacture, but the cottage showed marks of his ingenuity and handiwork everywhere. The pictures were framed by him; the books on the shelves received their somewhat cumbrous bindings at his hands; he always repaired both his own watch and the American clock, which stood on the drawers; he mended his own clothes, which no doubt accounted for their extended term of existence and use; he did the larger part of the washing on washing-days, as Mary was not very strong;—in fact he could do anything; make bread; cook; clean the house; make all sorts of wooden watch cases, and nick-nacks; and really well deserved, what I used to say jokingly of him in after days, that over the house door there ought to be a signboard, with the inscription,—

JOHN PALLISTER,
UNIVERSAL MAKER AND MENDER,
LIVES HERE.

"They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."—St. Luke i. 6.

Many were the visits I paid in after years to that house, and there was none where I was more entirely at home, where I was more cordially welcome, or whence I returned with more sense of entire sympathy, and of religious edification. For the quaintness of these old people was soon lost sight of in the conviction of their earnest and consistent piety. And this experience of mine was shared by many, who learned to love and respect them in like manner.

They were indeed two of the most prayer-loving, Bible-reading, and God-fearing people I have ever had the privilege of knowing. Their acquaintance with the facts and doctrines of our holy religion was extensive, but their personal devotion to the Saviour excelled.

Christ was everything to them. He was their Saviour from the guilt of sin, their Redeemer from its thraldom, their example for holy living, and of entire surrender of the will to God, their comfort in affliction, their Friend at all times, their Divine Brother;—their All in All!

How happy were they, when the Bible was asked for, and the words of life read; and then all kneeling down, Mary, because of the stiffness in her knees on a little wooden stool John had made for her, he on the floor, but having first spread his handkerchief so

save his well-worn trousers, patched so carefully on the knees,—we lifted up the voice of supplication; their continued response or rather unison making it sound all the while something like the saying of the General Confession, or the "Glory be to God in the Highest," in Church.

Then the good old people were great Tract readers, and such as from time to time were especially approved of were generally, after being read over several times, solemnly appointed to be bound in another new volume for the book-shelves, a work which John evidently deemed a very important and hallowed exercise of his manifold ingenuity.

At the request of our old friends, we instituted in their house one of our simple but most useful Helpers' Meetings, which was to them for the time it continued a great delight. A Helpers' Meeting is an hour once a week devoted to reading of Holy Scripture, singing, and prayer, on which occasion the room being prepared, and the bright fire burning if it be winter time, neighbours are asked in, and usually all the available chairs of the house occupied.

The reading and prayer are taken by godly people, who at the request of their pastor thus seek to perform the duty and to exercise the privilege of the universal priesthood of all Christians, for their own profit as well as for the good of their neighbour.

What an aggregate of blessed knowledge of the Divine word, of deep devotional impressions, and of

earnest supplication to God through Christ, will be the result of these simple efforts, only the last great disclosure will reveal!

Much, very much did John and Mary enjoy their meetings; which they said helped to keep the soul right between one Sunday and another; and which became still more valued and useful as increasing infirmities first kept Mary and then John away from the public means of grace.

"The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong they come to fourscore years: yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow; so soon passeth it away, and we are gone."—PSALM xc. 10.

WHOEVER knew our old friends only by seeing them as they were to be seen within the period to which my sketch refers, would never have imagined that John and Mary had both been previously married before they became husband and wife to each other. They were so apparently *one*, so alike each other in their simplicity, their quaintness, their wonderful neatness, cleverness and frugality,—above all in their lovely, yet fervent piety, that the ordinary observer would naturally have concluded that such entire unity of outward manner and inward disposition must have been in a considerable measure the result of a life-long association. But such was not the case. They had been married, when I first knew them, probably eighteen or twenty years, but they had each previously been for a

still longer period the partner of another. To these dead ones, however, they seldom alluded ; either their previous married lives had not been wholly comfortable, or the entire unity and harmony of their after experience in a great degree confined their thoughts and feelings within its limits.

John had been a soldier, and had served sufficiently long in the army to earn a pension, which though not large, only about Fifteen Pence a day, was, with their great economy and scrupulous carefulness, sufficient for their requirements. They never seemed to want any necessary, paid their rent exactly to the day, and were in their degree "independent people—living on their own means."

But in the course of years both John and Mary became more and more oppressed by the infirmities of age. Mary had always been feeble, and frequently very ill with spasms. Then John was her tender, woman-like nurse. They had a store of simple medicines, and were both, but especially Mary, amazingly clever in regard to "herb tea," "real, good mint-water," and the virtues of "paregoric ;" and so they for a while did without the doctor. But this was not always to be so; Mary's attacks would not always yield to the nostrums in the corner cupboard ; and John after a while began to display the more serious symptoms of chronic bronchitis. And then Mary was nurse ; forgetting her lameness, and her great debility, she hung over her husband with unabating care, as, struggling for breath, he sat up night and day in bed.

When John or Mary recovered from their attacks, it was peculiarly touching to visit the cottage.

Both the old people, very grateful for the further reprieve, would with overflowing eyes and reiterated vows of devotion to God, express their sense of "the goodness and mercy which had followed them all the days of their lives."

And at such times how sweet and holy were our frequent Communion Feasts!

At the beginning of 1867, however, John passed away,—in peace, but with great penitence of spirit,—relying wholly, as he said, "on the blood of Jesus." He was 75.

Mary was now left alone; she was two years older than her husband. The pension had gone with John; but there were those who took care that her wants were fully provided for. The cottage remained just the same; a kind neighbour gave her help, and all was tidy and clean as ever; and other kind and Christian neighbours were ever at hand if further assistance were needed; and dear old Mary was only different from what she used to be, in that she had now a widow's cap surrounding her always pale countenance, and that she was more than ever calm, and that when John's name was mentioned, she quietly wept.

One circumstance I ought not to omit. Very shortly after her husband's death, Mary sent all John's clothes, which had become a considerably larger wardrobe, and not quite so singular a one as when we first knew him,

to my house with a message, that she would be much obliged if I would give them away to the poor, "for," she said, "I can't bear to see them, when I have to go to the drawers they make me feel so troubled."

And so time passed on:—more visits of Christian friends; more communions; more weakness; the same sweet placidity of face and deportment; the same trust in the Lord, "for *I know* He will never leave me nor forsake me. He says He won't; and He can't break His word;" and then in the fearfully hot days of July, 1868, just sixteen months after her husband, we laid her besides him.

And there they rest together in the Cemetery;—a quaint old couple; but very good, very gentle, and very Christ-like!

No. 2.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

ESTHER RAINE

AND HER TEACHER.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
LEEDS: W. BRIERLEY, 2, BOND STREET.

One Penny.

ESTHER RAINE AND HER TEACHER.

TO those of us who have long been engaged in Sunday School teaching, nothing can sound more strange and startling than such expressions and statements as have of late been uttered concerning this blessed work. To hear professing Christians ask, "Are Sunday Schools of any use?" is a question we should never have expected.

Well may we ask:—What do these opponents of Sunday Schools expect? Do they look for Sunday Schools bringing *all* the children belonging to them to be true and living Christians? What ground have they for expecting such a result? If the Ministry of the Gospel itself has but in general such feeble results, why should the Sunday School be condemned because it is not more successful?

The proper question to be asked surely is this,—Are Sunday Schools, *when properly organised and worked*, producing that amount of good which may fairly be considered a compensation for the labour bestowed on them? Are they doing a work—a really beneficial work—for the masses of the population, which no other instrumentality attempts to do?

Without going into general arguments for a reply to these questions, let the following narrative be in some measure an answer. And yet narrative it can scarcely be called; rather, short and unvarnished notes of one single case of Sunday School instruction and influence are what the reader has before him in the following pages, and only such explanation is given as seemed necessary for rightly understanding them.

Let the reader then picture the newly-built suburb of a large manufacturing town. Rows of houses, more or *less completed*, with little gardens enclosed by railings; *the roads not* paved, and no footpaths in some parts

ret made. The windows bright, the steps clean, and an appearance of internal comfort to be seen as you peep through the half-opened doors. Such is the character of the neighbourhood where we are to find Esther Raine.

We knock, and a middle-aged female opens the door. Yes, this is the house, and we are anxiously looked for. Let us enter.

It is the usual sitting-room or parlour of this class of dwellings, with a kitchen below, and two stories of bed-rooms above.

We look round; all is clean and neat; a small light bedstead is in the far corner of the room; under the window, close by us where we enter, is a sofa, and sitting on the sofa, endeavouring to do some sewing at a little table, on which are laid books, is a young woman, apparently about twenty years of age. She is very thin, and very pale, but with a peculiarly refined face, and eyes remarkably full of expression.

Yes, this is my old scholar, ESTHER RAINE, whom I have not seen for several years.

A large Sunday School has some important advantages over a small one, but then there are on the other hand serious drawbacks. On the favourable side is especially to be noted the strong *esprit du corps*, which is always to be looked for in a large and well-managed Sunday School; an influence which is all the more powerful if the school has been sufficiently long established to have an hereditary tradition in its favour, where the children are occupying now the same benches on which their parents and elder brothers and sisters sat before. And this feeling is in its strength and usefulness not confined to the Scholars, the Teachers also partake of it; nor is the Pastor himself exempt from its influence. And it is more or less felt at all times, perhaps usually unconsciously so, but clearly manifested at particular seasons and in special circumstances. Such seasons are aggregate meetings of Teachers, or of Teachers and Elder Scholars, or at the great gathering at Whitsuntide, or when the parents are

invited to meet the Pastor and Teachers at Tea, on which occasions addresses are delivered on the duties of Parents and Teachers respectively, and the Home influence and School influence are alike pointed out and impressed upon those present.

But there are some counter-balancing disadvantages, which especially pertain to the large School. The Minister,—with all the other claims upon him, services in Church, visiting of the sick, calling upon his people, attending to all the auxiliary Institutions which crowd around an active pastorate, finds it impossible to have that personal, individual knowledge of all the children, which he feels he ought to have, if he could. What would become, in such a case, of the hundreds under his care, were there no Sunday School to receive them, and no earnest, spiritually-minded Christians to assist in doing for them what he thus vainly longs to do, but is unable to accomplish? Blessed be God for Sunday School help in the Church of Christ; for all the loving and precious aid afforded to an over-burdened and anxious Pastorate!

But there is one period and critical time in a Sunday Scholar's course, when a clergyman has to some extent, and that often a most valuable extent, the opportunity allowed him, nay, made incumbent on him, of meeting his elder Scholars in the closest personal intercourse.

Whatever may be said by ignorant and unthinking or prejudiced persons against Confirmation, it cannot be denied that the time of preparation for that ordinance is pre-eminently one which brings within the reach of the Pastor's most earnest and most affectionate ministration and influence, the young of his flock; and at that time of all others when they are most impressible, and their minds and hearts best prepared for Gospel teachings and earnest appeals. How often have I known a large class of Candidates altogether subdued under the power of the Spirit; how often has the reserved, *unbending youth*, or the forward, flirting girl, been *melted into tears*, and led to relieve the burdened heart

by sighs and sobbing, as the Pastor, kneeling by them, one by one, has cried to God for their soul's good; for their salvation through the blood of Christ; for their true happiness in time and in eternity!

It was at such a Confirmation season, that my attention was more fully drawn to ESTHER RAINE. She would then be about fifteen or sixteen. Her friends lived in a court not far from the Church and School, and she was brought up much in the same way as children of the working classes usually are.

Esther was bright, quick, and intelligent; but gave me the impression of one whose danger was then, and would be still more, that of lightness, love of gaiety, and of the pleasures of the world. But there was no ground for refusing her. On the contrary, she was clear in her knowledge, and hopeful as to her intentions, and so at the appointed time she was Confirmed. She also came to Holy Communion. Not long after this, it might be a year or two, she left our part of the town, and I neither saw nor heard of her, until the occasion when I entered the room, as before described.

I had, however, been sent for. She was seriously unwell, and now wished to see her old Minister.

As I mean to let Esther speak for herself, I may content myself now by saying that Esther had been placed in the comfortable lodgings where I found her, through the kind liberality of a relative, who willingly supplied all her wants. She was an orphan, and had long been so, and the generosity of this worthy man was as much needed as it was well bestowed.

After our first interview, I went almost daily for about two months. At Esther's earnest request, her former dear teacher in the Sunday School came also to see her, and other Christian friends gladly ministered to her bodily and spiritual comfort.

During this interval, Esther several times, at her own strong desire (a desire of course gladly met), had the Lord's Supper celebrated in her room. She had by this time taken to her bed, never to rise from it again. One of these occasions was a very solemn time. There

were present three of her old school companions, the much loved Teacher, Miss M——, two other dear sisters and helpers in Christ Jesus, and the same kind great-uncle, who was discharging to this poor young woman all the duties of a tender parent. Very blessed was the time, and all felt it indeed good to be there!

It must have been quite three weeks or a month after I had begun to attend Esther, that the thought struck me, that I had not made memoranda of my visits, and especially of her remarks. From the first, I felt impressed with the force of what she said, whether it was in reply to what I addressed to her, or spoken of her own accord; but it was not until the visits were half over, that I began to make short notes of what passed between us at these interviews. I ought to say, that prayer and the Word of God always occupied part of the time, and that it was during these sacred exercises that the conversations took place, the notes of which are here copied verbatim from my journal.

Very singularly, and not known to me until after Esther's death, one of the devoted Christian females, who regularly visited the wasting sufferer, also kept simple records of her visits, and of Esther's words; and though these are very similar in character to my own, I gladly append them, as showing by the concurrent and undesigned evidence of two separate witnesses, the work of Divine grace in the soul of this dear young woman.

July 9, 1867, 11 a.m.—During the course of my visit, Esther said, "I am getting nearer to my Saviour."

"All is nothing but vanity in the world. It seems wonderful to me now how people can neglect Jesus."

"Oh, the Bible is so different now: I see it all in a new light; it is all so plain—just what I want." This was said as she held in her hand a New Testament, *given to* her by Miss W.

I asked her when Jesus became so precious to her?

"*A good* while since, when I saw how poorly I was

I gave up the world, and worldly things;—but I was not right: for I was afraid to die. But about six weeks since, I had been awake a good while, and I got up, and went to draw up the blind; but fell back on the bed, *quite done*:—and then as I lay, hardly able to breathe, I heard a still small voice say, quite clearly, 'Prepare to die,'—and so then I turned to Jesus, and I gave myself to Him to be saved just as I was, through His blood, and then I became quite happy."

"What a wonderful thing how many friends I have! Why, this morning, ever so soon, Mrs. W. brought me this beautiful bunch of flowers:—and then Miss M. brought me some lavender water;—and everybody is so kind,—it is all Jesus: He has sent them."

I asked her if she would not like to be in the School once more, to tell the girls about Jesus.

"Oh yes—it would be so sweet: Oh, I wonder everybody does not love Him: I can't tell how I could live without Him."

She had a difficulty in raising the vessel to her face in which she expectorated.

"You see, sir, my poor arms are gone to skin and bone—poor, wasted body—poor bones—but they are good enough for the grave. But the soul will not be there: Oh," here she folded her hands over her head, and with great feeling said, "what a glorious change: to be with the angels and to see Jesus: Ah!—to see Him will be heaven!"

"I want to go:—but then I know I must be patient. I am sometimes afraid I am impatient,—but I don't want to be."

"Do come soon:—every time you come, I seem to go up a step—it helps me so much.—You are so kind to me—but then everybody is—it is wonderful—it is wonderful—but it is all Jesus."

July 10, 10 a.m.—"Yes, what I want is Peace—and then with it Patience;—and Jesus gives me both!"

We spoke of the Christian friends the Lord had raised up for her.

"*Oh, it is* sweet to have communion with Jesus, and

His dear people:—it is sweet fellowship!—How strange that I should never find it out,—and have it before!"

"When I am in pain, I think of Jesus, and all He suffered for me on the Cross,—and then He helps me to bear it, and I fall asleep,—and forget my pain."

July 11, 11 a.m.—I looked weary, from the heat. She noticed it, and I said, "Perhaps I am lazy."

"Oh, no, you must not appropriate that word to yourself. You are anything but that—going about in the hot sun must be very trying."

I said, "How do poor working people do—they have to go on their way, however hot the weather?"

"Yes—but then you have a higher calling,—and your work is as heavy—*heavier*,—but different."

"I had my scapegrace brother here last night. He said I should weather through this—I was'nt to mind. I said, Surely not:—I would not like to go back to the world; it would be like bringing me out of Heaven again.—He was so surprised when I said this,—and fretted very much."

"Oh, yesterday, and last night, I was so happy. I had so nice a day:—and then at night, the moon shone so beautiful into the room,—and I said to myself, Oh, if the angels shine like the moon, it will be so bright; —and Jesus!—and there will want no light from sun, moon, or stars. And then as I looked, there seemed quite a crown of light over the moon,—and I felt it come *quite into me*,—and then I fell asleep,—and had such a nice night. I find I have always the best nights when I think of Jesus and heaven."

"Oh, to see His face,—and wait on Him,—and to fly on His messages,—and just to know nothing and do nothing but His pleasure;—will it not be glorious?"

July 15, 5 p.m.—She said she had a very trying day yesterday: Satan had sorely tempted her. "But I wrestled with him,—and now to-day I have been so happy—Oh, it has been like Heaven."

I asked how she had been tempted,—"Oh, to go *back to the* world again;—or *to wish* to go back and *enjoy the world* again."

Some young ladies came in, and spoke of her window being so pleasant, just opposite her bed: She said, "Yes,—but it is so sweet in the night: it is nice at daytime to watch the clouds pass along: but when the stars come, it is so soothing. There is one star that looks in at me all night,—and it makes me feel so happy:—Oh, yes, the stars are so soothing!"

I quoted that all things worked together for good to them that *love* God; she said,

"Yes; and I am sure I love Him—for I am so changed: I don't feel anything now to be a disappointment. I had some buttermilk brought—and it was so sweet, and I did enjoy it so with a nice toast, and I reckoned all to-day upon my nice meal coming again this evening, of the buttermilk and toast: and then the mistress came and said, the buttermilk had not come; and she was so sorry for it; and I said, Oh, that is a very small thing,—we must not mind little things like that. Yes, *I am changed.*"

"No—I have no pain much now: Nothing to what I used to have. I have known dreadful pain and suffering; but that was before I was laid up. I lodged at ——, and had to get up at six o'clock,—and used to be for an hour together coughing up blood before I could dress myself,—and then there was nobody up to get me anything, and I had to walk to ——— to sew, and got nothing to eat till I had been there some time, and had to work hard all day:—Oh, I did suffer a deal;—but I had no one to tell it to. My sister had gone to America, and I had nothing but what I could earn. But" (and here her face glowed with brilliant joy, as she said) "Heaven will make up for all: Oh, God is so good;—so good;—and I am so happy."

July 16.—I spoke of her cough.

"Yes, it is sometimes hard work. I feel it impossible to get any breath;—I am almost choked;—yet" (with an entire change of countenance and great animation) "it is all nought: it is not worth thinking about: Heaven will make up for all. And then, what did our *Saviour suffer*—not only bodily but mentally! How He

was scorned, and shamefully used ;—and all the while He was so kind, and prayed for them on the Cross ; 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Oh, it was wonderful ! "

" I have been thinking this morning so much about Heaven ;—Oh, it would be impossible now to go back to the world, and be satisfied with it. Oh, to see Jesus, and to praise Him, and to praise Him as I ought, *that* will be Heaven ! "

July 17, Wednesday evening.—She was more than usually weak, and being laid on her side to the wall, had considerable difficulty in turning towards me. I wished to prevent it, and said : " It takes all your breath."

" Why :—it does ; for you see I have but very little ; but one ought always to find breath to talk of Christ."

Little was said—she was not equal to much. So I read from 4th and 5th chap. 2 Cor., and also repeated part of Isaiah liii. She burst out with all her energy and with a face beaming—

" Oh, what love ! Oh, what love ! How WONDERFUL ! Was there ever such love ? Oh, we ought to think of it *night and day*. Oh, Lamb of God, help me to love Thee : help me to bless Thee : help me to be all Thine : to suffer all Thy will :—not my will, but Thine be done."

I spoke of all our sins being laid on Him.

" Yes, sir ; but we must believe—we *must* believe ; we can't be saved without we believe."

July 29, *Monday*.—I had felt no call to make notes again until to-day, she being generally so weak at my visits, that she was unable to speak much. Her words used to be, with an expression of suffering, and yet great affection, " *Do talk—I can't talk.*"

To-day there were four things which I felt I ought to put down on my return home, but being engaged immediately, I was prevented, and now on the 31st, the day after her departure, I have only a partial remembrance of what I wished to remember. She was exceedingly weak, and distressed. I gave her a *message* from Miss M., her dear teacher, whom I had *seen that morning*. She said, with difficulty, " How

good they all are." I said, "Yes, but they are only marks of Christ's love." "Oh, yes, yes, yes—all is from Him: Oh, I wish I could bless Him:—bless, bless Him, bless Him for ever; oh, what a Saviour! oh, what love! oh, what love—what love!

She had become so excited that she had gradually raised herself up, her whole face beaming with inexpressible love and joy;—but she suddenly sunk down, almost breathless by the exertion. I had never seen her look so ecstatic. I said, before coming away, "It will not be long." She added in a low, earnest tone, "No; but we must wait His time. His time is the right time." After I had prayed, and given her the benediction, she lay with her hands clasped, her eyes closed; her countenance perfectly still; her appearance like a beautiful corpse. As I rose to leave, she murmured some loving expression of thanks, and followed me with her eyes to the door. I knew what the meaning of the look was, and said, "Yes, I will come in good time in the morning, please God."

But when morning came she was on her way to Paradise and Jesus: falling asleep in Him at 7.45.

MRS. A——'S JOURNAL.

July 7.—I have seen dear Esther Raine. Oh, how happy she is! We had a few verses out of St. John xv., and prayer, when she said, "How loving Jesus is to me; He sends me all I want: friends, and, above all, Himself."

July 8.—I saw her again, and read a few verses out St. John xvii., when she said, "Oh, I got that chapter off when I was at school; what a sweet prayer it is!"

July 12.—I have seen Esther again. How very happy she is! We were speaking of Heaven, and she said, "Yes, when we get there we shall want no sun nor moon, for Jesus, the Lamb, will be the light, and we shall have bright robes on, and walk through the golden streets; we shall sing praises! Oh, what a sweet place Heaven is! It makes me long to be there; but," she said, "you know Satan often comes to me and puts things into my head, but I say, 'Get thy

behind me, for thou dids't tempt my Lord, but He overcame, and I shall, through Him.'" Then, again, she said, "Oh what love my Saviour has had for me, in bringing me to this bed of sickness, to make me ready for Himself! It is all love! Oh, what great love! and I am blessed with many friends. It is my Lord who sends them." When I came away, I said, "Good afternoon, Esther." She said, "Good afternoon; God bless you, and fit you for your work."

July 16.—I have seen Esther again. Oh, how bright she looks, how sweet! She said, "I have felt so calm these few days. Angels are round about me. What love my Saviour has had to die for me—for such a great sinner as me! He will not suffer Satan to have me; no, His hand is so sure—so firm; He will fulfil His word. He says, Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. Jesus died on the Cross for me." Then she prayed for her dear minister, and said, "O Lord, fit him for his work; spare him many years to work for Thee."

July 19.—Dear Esther is very weak. I said, "I wish I could do anything for you." She put her hand on her Testament, which she always keeps in her bed, and said, "Christ;" meaning that He would help her.

July 20.—Dear Esther is worse this morning. When I entered her bedroom, she said, "Oh, I have been so wicked this morning; I have been so impatient! Oh, that Jesus may keep me to the end!" We prayed together. What a privilege it is to be with her!

July 22.—Esther is worse again. She will soon be with the Saviour. Being very weary, she slept a little. When she awoke, she said, "How ill-behaved I have been to keep you so long; but we must have prayer."

July 23.—To-day she is very weak, yet very happy, waiting for her Saviour.

July 25.—She appears to be getting very near to her end now. I said, "Are you happy, Esther? She said with a sweet smile, "Oh, yes,—I am so thankful for so *many friends.*" I pointed up, "Oh, yes," she said, "it *is my Father* who sends them all."

July 29.—To-day Esther is much worse, very near her sweet home above. What a change since Friday; so sunk, yet so calm, so peaceful and so grateful!

Wishing to be turned in bed, the person with whom she is turned her over. Esther looked at her, and said, with such a sweet smile, "No one could do for me as you can."

July 30.—And now dear Esther is at rest.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like hers. Amen. Amen.

And now after reading these notes, supplied by two different witnesses, let me ask the question, Where did this young woman learn the great truths of religion so strikingly manifested in her last sickness and death? Where did Esther, the poor dressmaker, obtain that deep insight into all the precious realities of grace?

What, so far as human agency was concerned, was the blessed instrumentality, which made this young woman's character, deportment, feelings, hopes, and inward experience, so different, so wonderfully different, to that of many; so strikingly accordant with the spirit and teaching of the Gospel? What was it that led her to know, and so intensely to admire, to love, and to adore her Saviour?

Only one answer can be given. It was the SUNDAY SCHOOL, and the sacred, hallowing, endearing, associations of the Sunday School, to which, under God, all was owing. The Sunday School had been to Esther the seminary of grace, and the nursery of Heaven: there the paper had been inscribed with the word of Life, and though the invisible ink had for the while seemed to disappear, and be as though it were not, yet brought at the time of trial, and in the furnace of affliction, under the glowing influences of the Holy Spirit, all the blessed words reappeared, every gracious promise started into realization and truth, and the glorious central figure in all real Christian teaching came fully into view; "*JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER*;"—"THE LAMB OF GOD WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD."

Esther Raine was buried on Thursday, August 1st, 1867. It was a cold and trying day, yet a goodly number of Christian people were assembled at the cemetery. Some of those present had known Esther in her school-days, some had been brought near to her in her last illness, some only attended from that common sympathy, which ought to mark every congregation, "So that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." Rich or poor, old or young, we have learned to follow all alike to the grave, and while thus paying the last mark of Christian respect to a departed sister or brother in the faith, to have the lesson again reiterated, that we also are mortal, and to ask with ever increased earnestness, "that we, with all those that have departed in the true faith of Thy Holy Word, may have our perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting kingdom."

And now we left the Chapel to go to the grave, and sang, as we always do, the solemn German Hymn,—

Lord, my times are in Thy hand,
Be they then at Thy command;
Let me live to Thee alone,
Then the sting of death is gone.

Whither should I, sinner, flee,
Lord, for shelter, but to Thee?
Thou hast gone before in grace,
To prepare a resting-place.

Bearing my sins' heavy load,
All Thy steps were mark'd with blood,
From the garden to the cross;
Suffering to regain my loss.

By Thy bitter agony,
By Thy life pour'd out for me,
O let me, a sinner, find
In my Lord a friend most kind!

As the procession moved slowly on, my eye fell on the tall figure of Miss M——, Esther's greatly-loved teacher, following as one of the mourners. She had come up in a cab; for the distance of the cemetery from her house was considerable, and she had long been in delicate health. For that reason she had some time before been obliged to commit the care of her Sunday

School Class to another, but being most anxious to work for her Master, so far as she was able, she had interested herself in a Mothers' Meeting, held once a week near her own home.

It was on August 1st, I said, that we committed the mortal remains of our dear girl to the grave; on the 6th November following, I was attending another touching scene:—

It is a large bed-room in a handsome house in ——— Place; and as I enter the clock strikes one. As I had passed through the streets at that untimely hour, the police turned their lanterns on me. By some I was recognised, and their hearty "Good morning, Sir," was not unpleasing. The Lord and the Lord's work have an echo in many hearts, where it would be least expected!

It was the bed-room of Esther's teacher;—dear Miss M—— was dying; so soon was she called to follow the scholar who had loved her so much.

But who shall describe not the peace only, but the triumph of that dying bed? I have seen numbers die, of all classes in society, of all kinds of diseases, by sudden and by slow removal, but I never saw the last enemy so stripped of his terrors as in that room. So calm, so serene, so *full of smiles*, so rejoicing in Christ was she, that, as I could not but say to one standing by, "She looked more as though she were going to her marriage, than as one lying in the arms of death!" Some one came into the room, and it was asked her, "You are not unwilling to die?" "Oh, no," was the instant and glowing reply, "I am *thankful to die.* I long to be with Christ, which is far better!" And so the hours passed on; we had prayer, and hymns, and words of Holy Writ;—and then prayer, and hymns and Scripture again; and sweet words of loving trust and glad confidence in Jesus, and of holy benediction in His name. She asked for her watch, took it out of the case, said it was "half-past four," and then added, which *showed why* she had done it, and how perfectly *she was in possession* of all her faculties: "The train

comes at six, does it not?" A near relative was coming from London, whom she much wished to see. He came and she was satisfied.

Soon after nine o'clock, as the light of the dim winter morning was admitted into the room, and fell upon the bed, she turned her face on one side, and it could scarcely be told at what moment the glad spirit fled away to God, and she and Esther, the teacher and the scholar, were again together!

The Holy Service was said in Church at her burial: a very large number of young and old, gentle and simple, filled the sacred place. Psalms were chanted, and hymns sung, and the inspired Word, as delivered by the blessed Paul, was read; and then the long procession moved on to the grave; and she also was laid to sleep till the Resurrection of the Dead.

And now once more let us ask, What do people mean by questioning the good of Sunday Schools? Where did this dear lady find the place,—the sphere, for the outgoings of her loving zeal for Christ, and for those for whom He vouchsafed to die? Where were the dormant energies of her Christian life first stirred into action, and souls—immortal souls—brought around her, to receive the impress of her warm, her generous, her unselfish character? Where was it, that she found a hundred-fold return for all her kind and self-denying efforts, in the respect, the affection, and above all, the spiritual good of those for whom she was thus gladly engaged?

O blessed Sunday School! Who would not love thee, for our Saviour's sake, seeing that He has honoured thee so greatly with His blessing, and filled thee so richly with the sense of His presence and His love!

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds

No. 3.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

ASH WEDNESDAY;

OR,

THE WAGES OF SIN.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

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ASH WEDNESDAY;

Or, THE WAGES OF SIN.

CHAPTER I.

"Saith the Lord, Turn ye to Me with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts, and not your garments."—JOEL ii. 12.

HOW solemn, how soul-affecting and conscience-arousing, is the Church's service on Ash Wednesday! The language of deep and extreme contrition; the utterings of the bleeding heart, groaning over sin; the awful denunciations of God's fierce wrath against the ungodly and the impenitent; the pleadings of the Divine Spirit, "Why will ye die?" "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" and then the loud cry for mercy, "Spare Thy people, good Lord, and give not Thy heritage to reproach;" priests weeping between the porch and the altar; a congregation overcome with emotion, and accompanying their part in the mournful and affecting service with streaming eyes!

At such a time, and at the conclusion of such a service, with feelings in some degree in unison with the awful intercourse just carried on betwixt the sin-stricken soul and God, I left the Church.

"Oh! my God, what a horrid thing is sin; how blind and how mad are we to bring that on

consciences which is afterwards to cause such fearful remorse and suffering; to sting thus like a serpent, and if not blotted out through Thine unutterable mercy, consigning the soul to everlasting woe! Oh! who would sin if he rightly estimated and considered the nature and the consequences of sin? What is there to set against sin? The ruin of the immortal soul, with the loss of heaven, and eternal banishment from God; or else, the Son of God himself must bleed and die!"

As these reflections passed through my mind, I left the vestry, and was making my way slowly and thoughtfully through the churchyard, when a figure suddenly stepped forward from a recess in the wall, and accosted me with, "Will your reverence please to come and see one that's very sick?" It was a woman, and evidently Irish, who thus addressed me—her head shrouded up in a dirty shawl.

I said, "Are you not a Roman Catholic, and should not you have your own priest?"

"An' sure an' if I am a Catholic; and what then? The woman who wants you is not a Catholic; she is one of your own, sure indeed; and you had better be coming, because and she has not long to live, I am thinking, and she has been crying out for you for these good few hours."

With that she turned to lead the way, and I followed her. It was now only about eight o'clock, for it was the first service which was just over; the morning was cold, heavy, and drizzling, and everything looked melancholy, and in accordance with the character of the day and with the errand on which I was thus going.

My guide led the way into a part of the town notoriously one of the vilest and the worst in every way, and turning down a dark and narrow lane, entered into a house of no promising exterior. Dim as the morning was, I could see that the place was wretched and filthy, and could feel that it was insufferably close. Huddled before the bit of fire was a number of women, some smoking, and some eating and drinking. However, I had not much time for observation, for the woman who had brought me passed quickly through the group, and began to climb some wretched, creaking stairs, and I went after her.

We now entered a bedroom, so full of beds that they were quite close to each other, but all empty; we were to go higher. The woman opened a door in the corner of this room, and began to ascend to the garret. This place also was full of beds, but like the room below, all were empty; and I began to wonder where we were to find the sick person, and what the adventure was to end in, when pushing the door close, my guide, pointing to the corner behind the door, said, "There she is, your reverence."

CHAPTER II.

"When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—ST. JAMES i. 16.

THE morning was yet dim, and the light there was could hardly make its way through the window, covered as it was with spiders' webs, and with the broken panes stopped with brown paper and rags, so

that when my guide spoke, and pointed to the corner of the room behind the door, I could at first discern nothing but what seemed a dark bundle of rags. By degrees, however, I became conscious of a dirty cotton gown, with two legs sticking out partly covered with some remnants of stockings, and in the extreme corner, propped up against the wall, a ghastly head, the face pallid and emaciated to the last degree, the eyes sunk, the nose sharp as before death, the lips livid, with the teeth set as in convulsions. Under the dying woman was a handful of filthy straw; and this was all there was between her and the boards on which she was laid!

Very much pained, I turned round to the woman who had summoned me to this shocking scene, and demanded, "Who is this wretched creature, and how long has she been here?"

"Why, your reverence, and isn't she an unfortunate girl? and we took her in out of pity: but sure and we didn't know she was so bad."

"Have you no doctor?" I enquired.

"Doctor! your reverence, and who was to pay for a doctor? Why, she has not the value of a halfpenny about her, save the frock she has on, and that is worth but little, I'm for thinking."

"And you are really letting her die here, and are getting no medical assistance, nor applying to any one to help you to get a surgeon! Well, I never heard of anything so bad!"

After considering the matter for a moment, I dispatched the woman for a surgeon in the neighbourhood, telling her to use my name, and to beg him to come

immediately. When she was gone, I turned to the wretched object, and saw that her eyes were fixed intently upon me. I knelt down beside her, and said, "You are very ill." She made an effort to speak, and after a little time articulated with difficulty, "I am, sir."

"Have you anything you wish to say to me?"

"*Yes, pray—pray for me!*"

"Are you fit to die?"

"No, I fear not—I have been very wicked."

"Have you tried to pray yourself?" I asked.

She replied, with great earnestness, "Yes, yes! all night."

I at once began to pray, and was so engaged when the Irishwoman, accompanied by the surgeon, re-entered the room.

Whilst Mr.—— made his examination, I turned aside and questioned the woman as to what sustenance the poor creature had had during the night; and finding that she had had none, I sent out immediately for some wine, and with the sanction of the surgeon had it immediately administered to her.

"She may have anything you choose to give her, or rather, can get into her," he said; "it is of very little consequence; she is in *articulo mortis*. I can do nothing whatever for her; she is too far gone."

He left,—and I, taking the cup with the wine and water from the women (for two or three had now come upstairs), again took my place, kneeling by her head. "The doctor says you are near your end," I uttered slowly in her ear.

She made a motion to the effect that she was aware of it. I said, "What do you say?—have you any hope of mercy?" She looked at me, and then upwards, and then somewhat vacantly round the room, and at last murmured, "I don't know."

I saw she was getting rapidly worse, and exclaimed to her, "Call upon the Lord Jesus; say, 'Jesus, have mercy upon me! Jesus, who died for sinners, have mercy upon *me!* Jesus, help a poor, wicked sinner! Jesus, save me! Jesus, save a dying sinner!'"

She again faintly and hoarsely articulated, "*Pray—for—me!*"

I prayed, and continued to pray from my very heart; and as I prayed the countenance changed, and the convulsions came on. Then there was a short respite, and I prayed again. Again she writhed in agony, her body twisted, and the legs coiled up under her, and an awful expression came over her face. But she was again still, and again I prayed; she evidently was trying, despite of her agony, to pray herself: but once more the struggle came, the rattling in the throat followed, and the deep, long heaving of the chest; then the stretching out of the legs, and the putting back of the head, the distended jaws, the fixed, staring eyes,—and all was over!

God of mercy, have mercy upon us! God of the spirits of all men, have pity upon us!

Jesus, by Thine agony and bloody sweat, by Thy cross and passion, have mercy upon us! Jesus, mercy! *Jesus, mercy!*

WATCH ye by the dying,
Toll the passing-bell;
Swift the moments flying,
Soon the final knell;
Hark the heavy groaning,—
Mark the writhing limb;—
Deeper now the moaning,
Pray, oh, pray for him!

Watch ye by the dying,
Kneel ye very low;
On His cross relying;
Call to Jesus now:
Son of God most holy,
Merciful and good,
Cleanse, oh, cleanse him wholly,
Save him by Thy blood!

Watch ye by the dying,
Till he pass away,
Still to Jesus crying,
For the sinner pray:
Fiendish craft and error
May assault the soul,
Waves of awful terror
O'er the conscience roll.

Watch ye by the dying,—
Blessed angels there
List your hearts' deep sighing,
And your pity share;
Christ Himself attending,
Soon will give release,—
Lo! the strife is ending;
Jesu!—Mercy!—Peace!

CHAPTER III.

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."
—PROVERBS xii. 10.

I DESCENDED the stairs, and stood in the place below, with the women around me. "Who is this woman who is just dead?" I said, "and what is *her name?*"

"Why sure, sir, and did I not tell you? She has been an unfortunate girl, and her name is BESSIE ALDERSON."

"And where does she come from?"

"Oh! she's a Woodhouse girl, your reverence."

"And how long has she been in this house?" I asked.

"Oh, since Monday; and now it is Wednesday. She just looked in at the door, and said she was tired and cold, and would I let her sit down a minute."

"Well; and what then?"

"Why, and then, your reverence, she became somewhat poorly, and she didn't go."

"And what had she to eat?" I said.

"Oh, and she had nothing whatever; and so we told her she must go to the relieving officer, and she must have something from him."

"Well, and did she obtain anything?"

"Only a loaf of bread, your reverence."

"And did she eat any of that?"

"No, your reverence; when she got back from the workhouse, she was so done over with walking there, and waiting so long in the rain to see the relieving officer, that when she got back she could not eat any bread at all."

"Was there nothing she could take?"

"Yes, your reverence, she wanted some tea."

"And did you give her any?"

"Give her any, your reverence! and where should I be for getting any tea to give her? I had no tea to *give* her. I am only a poor woman, your reverence."

"*But* what became of the loaf she got?" I said.

"Oh, the loaf, your reverence! *and did we not take that for her lodging*, to be sure."

And so it came out that this poor creature had been in the house from Monday to Wednesday morning, and had never tasted food of any kind, whilst the inhuman beings had taken her loaf (to obtain which had perhaps cost her her life) for lodgings—*the lodgings being that she might lie as she was, with no other covering than her wretched cotton frock, upon the boards, behind the garret door, with a handful of straw under her!*

Oh, what a world is this! What has sin made it; what has sin made us!

"An' please, your reverence, an' what are we to do about burying her?" demanded the woman of the house.

"Has she no friends?" I said.

They knew of none; she had been wholly destitute for a long while. She had told them she had not slept in a bed for a month or more, and had been continually starving.

"And pray," I inquired, "where might she sleep, if she did not sleep in a bed all this while?"

"Oh, sure, in passages and such like places; anywhere, where she thought the police would not find her."

"What," I said, "was she known to the police?"

"Why, only as being very badly off, and often sleeping out, but she never was in prison for stealing, or anything bad. Bess was a very quiet girl, very quiet, and was never known to do harm to any one."

"And how old was she," I said; "do you know?"

The woman paused, and had to consult with the others, when they agreed she might be about two or *three and twenty!*

"I will write to the workhouse for a coffin, and they will also pay for the grave, and send men to carry her," I said; and was turning away,—

"And pray, your reverence, and who is to wash her and to make her decent, and what—is she not to be wrapped in something better than that old cotton rag?"

I thought for a moment, and considering the character of those I had to do with, and that if I gave money it would most probably all go in drink, and the poor creature's remains be sent to the grave in the state they were,—I replied, "I will send a person who will see to all this;" and so left the place.

CHAPTER IV.

"The Lord is known to execute judgment; the ungodly is trapped in the work of his own hands."—PSALMS ix. 16.

HOW relieved I was, both physically and mentally, by emerging from that horrid place, and from the association with those vile creatures, and from the dreadful scene upstairs, where the stench alone was enough to make one ill for days; how great a load was taken off from me, as I passed out and breathed the open air, heavy and oppressive as I should under any other circumstances have thought it, no words can express!

I hastened on, and soon had sought out one well *known to* me, who was the person I had thought of to

see the necessary attention paid to the corpse. She was indeed a guileless, harmless creature; one who, poor as poverty itself, yet was only too glad to be employed on such an errand as this. Where there was a work of mercy to be done, who so willing, who so unwearied in the doing of it, as poor Ann D——? She would wander over the town to everybody likely to help, rather than that any poor person whom she knew to be in want should not be relieved, and would go through much in the way of trying rebuff in the accomplishment of her merciful purpose, *but she was never known to ask anything for herself!*

Peace be to her memory; she has herself been laid now for some time in the last resting-place! She was swept off by typhus fever in the summer of 1847, and passed away almost without notice. Surely she has gone to her reward! Poor and illiterate, and very lowly in her own eyes, and contemptible to the world, she loved Thee, O Lord, and dearly loved the habitation of Thy House, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth; and she was far more pleased to be a door-keeper in the House of her God, than she would to have been a resident in an earthly palace!

That evening a corpse was brought to the church, enclosed in one of the plain parish coffins; one or two women followed, and Ann was there also. I read the Service, and thus consigned to the dust the remains of the one whose fearful end I had been so unexpectedly called to witness.

"I shall see her again at the resurrection," I said to myself; "this is a fearful day. Ash Wednesday is

a day for the remembrance of sin, and for mourning for it; but *that* day will be far, far more so. I wonder how she will look then, and what will be her doom. Ah! and what, O God, will be mine also? Oh! for my soul's sake, and for my Saviour's sake, help me to look at sin now, and hate it, and repent of it, and tear it from my heart, whatever it costs me to do so, that I may not have to suffer for it when I come to die, and on that last terrible day!"

I saw my good and willing agent again next morning. "I did all you wished, sir," she said. "I bought soap, and washed the body, and wrapped it in a piece of flannel I had also bought, and I put on her one of my own caps, for I thought that I should not like her to be buried without one; and then when I had done all, I came away, for I did not like to be with the people in that place. I am sorry to say, sir, that I find the woman of the house, and others, went during the afternoon through the whole of ——gate and some other streets, telling about the poor creature having died of starvation, and begging for something to bury her with; and they got so much, that they were drinking all through the night, and disturbed the whole neighbourhood. Was it not very dreadful, sir, and very wrong, when they had never done anything at all for her? I am sure I often wonder the Almighty lets the world go on, there is so much wickedness in it!"

And so ended Ash Wednesday, 1846.

The autumn of 1849 was a fearful time with us. The cholera was raging, and carrying off its victims by seventy and eighty in a day; all was terror and consternation. I had my share of contact with the pestilence, in warning and arousing the living, and in ministering to the dying.

And now I was myself lying in bed, slowly recovering from the gripe of the formidable disease; out of the immediate range of the infected localities, but so near as to hear daily accounts of what was taking place.

Now it was in this street, and now in such a court; here, a whole family swept off that I had known; there, a poor old woman that had come to the daily Litany, present one morning, buried at the same hour the next! O Lord, when Thy judgments are abroad in the earth, surely the inhabitants thereof will learn wisdom!

"Very bad account this morning," said my usual informant, one day as he sat by my bed; "the disease has broken out in that very low neighbourhood, Back —— Street, and there has such an event occurred last night as I could not have credited, had I not known it to be true. At the top of the street there is a lodging-house, kept by some Irish people." "Yes, I know it well," I said, interrupting the relator; "I know both the house and the people. Go on, I am anxious to hear."

"Well," continued my friend, "then if you know the people, you will be shocked to hear what I am going to say. Last evening the wife of the man who keeps the house was attacked with cholera, and was soon very bad. The surgeon of the district was sent

for, and after seeing her, ordered her medicine; he gave her husband an order to go out to the workhouse for a quantity of brandy for her, which she was to take freely. The man accordingly went, but did not return. She became worse and worse, and her cramps were so bad that the whole neighbourhood was alarmed with her dreadful cries. About midnight the man returned, and reeled into the room where his wife was lying in the last agony. *She was still sufficiently sensible to be conscious, from what took place in the room, that he was drunk with the brandy he had obtained for her from the workhouse, and for want of which she was dying. She died before morning.*"

Reader, that was the house where BESSIE ALDERSON had died, and this was the woman who had taken her last loaf from her, and suffered her to die for want!

"Doubtless there is a God that judgeth in the earth." "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 4.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE SNOWDONS.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
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One Penny.

THE SNOWDONS.

CHAPTER I.

It was a time of great distress among working people, —there was no trade for their employers, and therefore no work for them. Our Visiting Societies were called upon to their very utmost capabilities, in order to meet even in some small measure the want and destitution which everywhere existed around us.

We gave both food and money; but only a small amount in money, the larger part of the relief was afforded in provisions, to obtain which we wrote orders, generally weekly, upon the shopkeepers. These orders the poor people took and obtained goods to the amount stated, and we, the Visitors, called afterwards and paid the bills.

All this is familiar enough to Visitors of the Poor.

And Visitors of the Poor know also, how, after all the care that is taken to arrive at the truth and prevent imposition, it is almost impossible at times to avoid such imposition. Stories are told us, so plausible that none but very experienced and very acute Visitors can escape being deceived.

Such things as taking the children's shoes off, and putting them out of sight before the Visitor comes; or carefully removing all food except a little dry bread, which at the time the Visitor is expected is placed on the table, and the family seated round with melancholy looks, while all the while there will be both butter, and sugar, and even bacon in the cupboard, only waiting for the gentleman's departure to make its appearance; or above all, the borrowing of a baby for the occasion: these *are some* of the experiences a Visitor may have to *become* acquainted with.

During that very period of distress to which I am alluding, I remember going unexpectedly to visit a case, represented to be one of extreme distress. The man had come to me towards the close of a cold day in December and strenuously urged an immediate visit; "the children had no food, the cellar where they lived was damp, and they had no fire, and *the weather was so very cold.*" I promised to go at once; but notwithstanding all my endeavours, it was impossible to do so that night; the number of cases to be visited was so large, that some were obliged to be postponed until the morning.

But it was yet scarcely light next day, when I was descending the steps to the cellar in —— street, where I was to find this suffering family. I opened the door, and saw a scene very different to what had been described to me. The man, his wife, and children, were sitting round a table on which were placed all the necessaries of a good breakfast, while just in front of them, near enough for their feet to be half-burnt, was a large, bright fire!

Both the man and woman were sitting with their backs to me, as I opened the door, but a little girl about five years old saw me, and quietly took a plate with about half a pound of butter from before her, and placed it on her lap under the table. By this time the man had risen, and with some embarrassment began to express surprise at my very early visit, and then taking his own chair, which he brushed with the tail of his coat, he pushed the table back, and placed the seat close in front of the fire. "Well," I said, "I have come to see you, as you wished, but I think you are scarcely so badly off as you said;—you seem to have a comfortable breakfast enough, and as for having no fire,—why, there is fire enough here to roast any one." I looked at the man to see what answer he could give. He was silent a moment, then looked at the fire with an air of marked complacency, and turning to me, said, "Fire—did your honour speak of the fire?—to be sure and it is an elegant fire,—for

didn't I say to Judy, Sure and must we not have a fire? *We must have a fire—because your honour would be coming, and your honour would be cold.*"

Having such cases on our hands it was important to us that we should deal with shopkeepers for the supply of the provisions we needed who would, if they saw we were deceived, hold back the orders until we could be informed of the real character of the people. But such honesty was not always to be had, as it obviously was the interest of the dealers to supply all the tickets they could, and the refusing to do so in any case would be the sure means of keeping such persons from ever coming to the shop to spend money of their own.

CHAPTER II.

I had been a good deal disappointed in not finding the perfect integrity I wanted, when I was told to try GEORGE SNOWDON, who kept a general provision shop in ——gate, very conveniently situated for the people I had to relieve.

Five and thirty years have passed since I paid my first visit to GEORGE's shop. He was busy with sugar, and soap, and cheese, the place full of that peculiar combined odour of these articles along with tea, coffee, bacon, etc., which one gets to know so well, and which we become fully aware of as we knock our hats against the tallow dips, hanging in clusters over the counter.

GEORGE's face was the face of an honest man, and his words and dealings were in keeping with his looks. He was a man of about sixty or more; stout, with a bald head, and a round solid face, expressive of good sense and truthfulness. He wore no coat, but had one of those coloured waistcoats made of some strong material like cows' hair, with fustian sleeves, which used to be more especially worn by carriers; and of course he had a white apron;—for what decent tradesman, dealing in provisions of any kind, ever in former days dreamt of not *wearing his* apron, whether he was behind his counter, or *out of doors*, only in the latter case he would tuck up

one corner under the string, that it might not be in the way of his walking. Ah, when one brings back the decent, respectable tradesmen of former days, with their well-shaven faces, their round stomachs, their white aprons, and their honesty and civility, one wonders how the present race could have become what they are:—with their fine clothes and albert chains, their beards forsooth, their country houses, and their six weeks at the sea-side or on the continent! But then, we must remember, *they advertise.**

Mrs. SNOWDON one did not often see. She was a very fat little woman. I believe she sat a good deal in an arm-chair by the fireside, and had a girl to do the work. She was very different to her husband, and I think considered herself somewhat his superior.

He gave the impression of having been a carrier, or plain working man; she of having lived in good families, probably as cook, by which she had saved money, and thus commenced the shop-keeping. Certainly she was always called "Mrs. SNOWDON," while he was content with plain "GEORGE." Then she went to chapel, and had some of the phraseology often acquired there, but her husband was a regular attender at church, where in the later years of his life he might be readily distinguished by having a red cotton handkerchief with a white spot on it (I can see it now) laid folded on his bald head to protect it from the draughts, which in that church, as in many others, were seldom wanting. Such were GEORGE and ALICE SNOWDON, and if you add to what has been said, that they had no children, you have the account pretty fully made up.

* There are, however, different views held regarding advertising, as the following incident will shew. Passing along D—— Street one day, my eye caught a placard on the walls announcing a cheap trip to a well-known watering-place, and as I was just then wanting to send a poor convalescent person to the seaside, I went closer to ascertain the day and hour for the train to leave. While thus engaged (I don't, reader, see quite as well as I used to do), I was suddenly accosted by a woman's voice, speaking somewhat sharply: "Well, I do wonder at ye, Mr. ——, looking *at them things;* a man 'at can read his Bible as ye can ought to be ashamed to spend your time at *looking at them!*" I don't know whether the good woman thought I was *perusing some theatre* bill or notice of auction sale, but I took the reproof, *and at once walked* quietly away.

CHAPTER III.

George Snowdon was an honest man. This I soon found. On looking over the first batch of tickets, which he brought out of one of those glass jars with covers, in which shopkeepers keep comfits, mint lozenges, etc., I saw that the number was not so large as I had expected. "There are three notes wanting," said he, "two women wanted to have ham rashers instead of bread, and the other was so tipsy I thought she would hardly carry it safe home;—so I told them, both one and the other, —that I would wait till I saw you, before I served them." This was all right, and I felt obliged by the thoughtfulness and good principle displayed. And so I always found it with George. While others, with whom I had similar transactions, were only intent to have as large a claim on me as possible, and so supplied the bearers of the tickets with whatever they asked for, irrespective of the articles put down for them to receive, George alway seemed to act as though the money had to come out of his own pocket, and would be no party to deceit or dishonesty.

That "honesty is the best policy," is an old maxim, —a good maxim, and a true one. But then like many other maxims and truths you must often give a very different application to the ordinary and obvious one. A man, by speaking the truth, and saying that the piece of cloth which his customer is looking at is not all wool, may thus lose the profit he would have made had he been less honest. In the evening, when he reckons up his trade transactions for the day, he will be all that less in pocket than he might have been. And so in many other ways, honesty is not always found to be the best policy, if we judge by the immediate results. Not that I mean to say, we always lose by being truthful and honest, but on the other hand we do not always gain by it, and sometimes may lose a great deal. At least we appear to do. It all depends upon when we cast up the account.

GEORGE at any rate did not appear to thrive by his dealings, honest as he was in all of them. I could not hide from myself as time passed on, that the shop was but scantily stocked;—that there were but one or two sides of bacon,—an equally small quantity of cheese,—that the pigeon holes on the shelves held but few pounds, and halves, and quarters of sugar and soap,—and that all betokened a decay in the circumstances of the worthy couple.

I was therefore not surprised, though very sorry, when one day, after settling my bills, George informed me he was going to give up business. "The rent was very heavy, *Forty Pounds a year, and all cesses*, and trade was slack, and there was a deal of money they couldn't get in. They had let folks have their stuff when trade was bad and they had nought coming in, and now when they were better off, and could pay if they liked, they wouldn't come near, but went to other shops to buy what they wanted. So he and his wife had lost their bit of money, and their trade too. They didn't want to wrong anybody: they could pay everybody now—if they went on, they mightn't,—so they were about to give it up."

I asked what they were going to do. Mrs. SNOWDON, who was by this time also behind the counter, answered that she was sure she didn't know, but GEORGE was right; they had better give it up, and leave it to the Lord to provide for them; "at worst there was t'workhouse." Here she fairly broke down, and GEORGE had to apply the corner of his apron to his eyes,—and I, feeling deeply for the poor old people, was glad to get away.

Ere long, the shop was closed; that is, was closed for a while, and when re-opened looked as much different from its old appearance as a man does in his Sunday clothes, from what he does in his working-day ones. Now it was the "Cheapest Shop in the town" and "the People's Mart." Everything was to be had there considerably less than cost price, and no greater injury could any one do to themselves than not to go there, and "make *their purchases* at ruinously low prices!"

So said the great bills which were posted on the shop front, and stuck up in the top panes of the windows, and so said the little bills, which the man with the squint, who smelt so strongly of beer, thrust into your hand as you passed the shop, whenever you went up and down the street.

Truly, trade is a wonderful thing, as carried on upon the enlightened system. *They lose by all they sell—and could only get on by doing a large stroke of business!*

It is true, that in the new mode of doing business, according to the improved system, the shop sometimes, as in poor George Snowdon's case, has to be shut up. But then it is a very different way of shutting up shop to the one he was driven unto. The gentleman now takes the favourable opportunity afforded him by "a momentary embarrassment in his affairs," of seeing a little of the country for a time; you may observe him driving out with his wife and interesting family in a large roomy phaeton, or utilising the pleasant excursion facilities which the railway companies, entirely for the convenience of the public, so obligingly provide. And when he comes back, with a fine brown complexion gained during his stay at the sea-side, in a short while the shop is opened again, and "the public are placed in the exceedingly advantageous position of being enabled to purchase from an entire New Stock, *laid in under the most favourable circumstances, and offered at such prices as to defy all possible competition!*"

CHAPTER IV.

George Snowdon was not an educated man, and he did not begin again better than he was before he left off. People like him lived under great disadvantages, and lost no little by their want of shrewdness, and of the proper knowledge of doing business. He was much to be pitied.

I could not but think so, when I saw the good old man and his wife, for the first time, in the cottage, in —— yard, to which they had removed. It was a close

dingy place, and the little house was very stuffy. One could not consider it as right that they should be shut up there. The premises were roomy where they had been before, and the shop door being open, there was always plenty of air; but here they were in narrow compass enough, having only one small dwelling-room, with the sink smelling very unpleasantly (the houses had to drain themselves in those days), and the single equally small bed-room above. Especially one felt that the arrangement was altogether out of place for Mrs. SNOWDON. What could so fat a woman do in those closet-like rooms! And then there was no girl now, and she or GEORGE must do all the work,—wash their clothes, scour the floor, go out to buy the basket of coals, make the bed! However, that she certainly could not do; it was not possible for Mrs. SNOWDON to shake the bed; she could not shake herself! And then they were both lame;—she had to use a crutch, having, if I remember rightly, fallen some time before, and broken her leg. Poor people!—their honesty apparently had not been a very profitable policy!

Of course, I kept my eye upon the old couple, in the anticipation of their needing help. But GEORGE said they "were not without," and he would rather not trouble any one, so long as they could provide for themselves.

It happened, however, just then, that a deceased gentleman's wardrobe of clothes came into my possession, and so looking out for proper recipients, I naturally thought of GEORGE SNOWDON. Accordingly, I called at his cottage, and told him how glad I was to offer him a coat as good as new, which I thought could not but be acceptable. GEORGE heard me expatiate on the excellence of the garments I had to bestow, but when I stopped, to my surprise made the reply: "I am very much obliged, but I don't want a coat, and therefore could not accept the one you kindly wish to give me. My Sunday coat is very good yet, and on other days I don't wear ought but my sleeved waistcoat, you see, Sir." "*Well, but,* GEORGE," I said, "I think you have wo

the same Sunday coat ever since I knew you, I should have thought you could do well with another instead of it." "No, Sir," replied the old man, "I have worn it *forty years* as a Sunday coat, and it's very decent yet, and I really don't want another; it will serve my time."

As I came away, GEORGE following me to the door to repeat his thanks "all the same," I could not but think well both of the texture of old cloth and of old principles: it was plain they both wore well.

But things did not improve with the old people. GEORGE failed to secure some light employment, though he was willing to try his hand at anything; "nobody wanted old men." And Mrs. SNOWDON certainly was not so stout as she had been; she was visibly declining in size; and I found myself addressing her one day as "ALICE;"—which was a sure sign of her decreasing weight;—I should never have spoken to her in that way in former days.

"How do you manage to live?" I asked on one of my calls; "the little you had must be done, and you have nothing coming in. I can't tell how you contrive to get on." There was no answer from GEORGE; he turned his head away, but I thought I saw tears drop on his knees. ALICE broke the silence; "He doesn't like to tell you, Sir, but the truth is, we have had nought left for a good while, and we have been doing very poorly; we've been selling things out of the house. GEORGE sold the clock, and that kept us three weeks, and now we've been living a week on a chair that a man gave us five shillings for;—but we don't want much, for GEORGE eats very little, and I haven't much appetite now."

Poor, poor old people! No time was lost in supplying their immediate wants, and in stopping the exodus of the little furniture left. We have an admirable charity in the town, commenced by a wealthy and benevolent merchant, for the maintenance of decayed, *aged tradespeople*; surely this poor, honest couple were *exactly such* as should be admitted on the lists of

the recipients. A married couple had an allowance of twenty-five pounds, and this sum would make the Snowdons perfectly comfortable.*

But (and there is almost always a "but" with every good thing) in this Institution each subscriber has the privilege of voting for such candidates as he prefers, and therefore it is necessary to bring the circumstances and claims of the candidates before them. In other words, either the candidates, or their friends for them, must canvass all the hundreds of subscribers, or else there is no chance of their becoming elected on the list of pensioners.

We held a council: a dear, good lady, well known for a life-long labour for the poor (now with God), offered both to provide the printed circulars, stating George's case, and also herself to see some of the subscribers on his behalf. George having nothing else to do was personally to canvass the remainder. And so, with his little notes carefully folded and directed by good Miss S——, and put into his cotton handkerchief to keep them clean, George might be seen in his cloth cap, his waistcoat with the fustian sleeves and the white apron, every morning, and then again after their simple meal at mid-day, going on his rounds, trying to find out the houses or offices of the numerous subscribers, ringing the door-bells, or knocking, with diffidence and lowly deportment, and pulling off his cap to every servant-maid or office-boy who took the circular from him.

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* How very much better is aid imparted on the principle of a free pension than by building almshouses!

Looking at the question as one of economy, it may be safely said that the same amount of money will go at least twice as far by the pension system as by the almshouses plan.

But as almshouses are often built, the amount expended in the erection of these elaborate and ornate structures, together with the sum sunk for endowment, would provide comfortable pensions for at least four times as many aged people.

Standing on the terrace in front of a heavy Gothic pile, with the small windows and deep roof of the fourteenth century, I said to an old man, one of the residents, "Well, this is a fine place; you seem to have everything here; and the chapel so close to you."

"Why, it's all well in its way; but most of us would a deal rather it wasn't so fine. Why, we can hardly see in t'houses; and in t'chapel, what with little windows, and them being all painted, ye see, we can't see at all. *Nay, am sure most of us would a deal rather have stayed at home, if they'd given us half of t'brass.* Eh, it's a dull place; one has never a pig nor a *nowt to look after, and its fair dowly living!*"

CHAPTER V.

At last came the great day of election, and George in the well-used Sunday coat with Alice by his side, were to be seen, along with the other anxious candidates, waiting in the Court House until "the gentlemen" had counted the votes, and the Mayor declared who were happily successful.

But on this occasion, whoever else were so, George and Alice Snowdon were not. The elected pensioners' names were declared; certain old men and women seemed for the moment almost lifted off their feet with gladness, while their relations and friends came round to congratulate them on their success. George and his little old woman hobbled slowly home.

It is a very remarkable fact, how kind all poor people's relations are, when the latter have become in some way provided for. Very oddly, those who would not notice them, much less help them, before, are now so exceedingly civil and obliging!

One cannot, however, help wishing, that this canvassing, and the necessity of it, were done away. Why should not the subscribers have that confidence in the gentlemen whom they elect as their committee, to leave it with them to select from the list of the candidates such as from seniority, poverty, and previous good character, are obviously the most suitable; and thus save all the sad trouble and expense to which these poor people have now to subject themselves? Some of them actually go through this heavy task, in increasing weakness and depression of spirits, for seven, eight, or more successive years!

But how shall I rightly describe the deportment of poor George under this heavy disappointment?

He repined not in the least. Many a long and weary tramp in rain and cold had he had, to deliver his circulars, *the fatigue* of which had been greatly aggravated by his *lameness;* but he only said, when the subject was referred

to, "I always asked the Lord to do what He saw best about it; and I know it is all right." I was amazed at his perfect self-control and meekness.

For the next twelve months, the poor old couple lived on the charity of the congregation to which they belonged, for Alice now came to church;—that was, when she went anywhere, for she grew increasingly infirm, and was again very heavy. It was, however, the weight of disease; she was becoming dropsical.

George now, having nothing else to employ his time, joined the band of working-men who distributed tracts. He had his district assigned to him, and in his old shop attire, his waistcoat and his apron, and with his stick in his hand, he went regularly every week from door to door exchanging his tracts, with the same "*very much obliged to you*," in every case, even the poorest, as when in former days he had received payment for a stone of flour, or a pound of bacon.

The only subject which seemed to cause him uneasiness, was the anticipation of having to canvass again before another election of Pensioners to the Charity. For it was taken for granted that he must again apply. But even this was met in the same quiet and submissive spirit as were all his other trials. And so once more, in due course of time, the circulars were printed, the same willing hands folded them, and the same long list of names of subscribers was gone through in order to direct them;—and George again began his rounds.

The work was, however, considerably lightened, a larger proportion of the calls was this time undertaken by others for him, and one gentleman, who had had dealings with the Snowdons in their business days, and who had a high opinion of their rectitude, took considerable pains to obtain votes for George. And now he was not unsuccessful. He was declared duly elected, and entitled to the Pension of Twenty-five pounds a year for life.

I well remember his coming to me on the day he *received his first* quarter's payment. With what quiet

sober happiness he expressed his thankfulness for God's goodness to him and to his poor infirm wife; and his then adding, "And now, sir, will you please to take that for the Lord? My wife and I wish to offer it for the spread of the gospel, as a thank-offering." Saying which, he put into my hand—what do my readers suppose? *A sovereign!* Yes, one-sixth of this money so long looked for, and so laboriously sought after, had these poor people brought as a free-will offering to God! And they *so poor*, wanting many things which others would have at once sought to provide, and with three months before them, ere another payment would come into their hands!

At first I strongly declined to receive the sum, pointing out that their own necessities would require it; but I saw I was giving pain; the money was already in the good old man's estimation no longer theirs, they had given it with all their heart and soul to the Lord;—to whom they had already given themselves.

CHAPTER VI.

How mysterious are the Divine dealings! Even with a large measure of faith in God's goodness and wisdom, if there were not *a future* to be weighed in the scale along with the present, we should often be both sorely perplexed and fatally discouraged. Only by bringing into the account the thoughtful consideration of that long, endless, future, can we conceive how things may be allowed to take place, which otherwise would be inexplicable to us; and how, after all, "honesty may be the best policy." Within six months of the happy event which had removed the Snowdons altogether above want, and ensured them a measure of comfort and ease for the remainder of their days, George Snowdon was dead! His long-standing bronchial affection had become aggravated, and during the first winter following the election, after about ten days of suffering, he passed away. He passed away in the most entire calmness, with absolute *confidence in* God, and in perfect peace with all men.

It was all right, he said; all his losses and trials had been to prepare him for the other world, and he was sure the Lord had done all things well!

Alice was now left alone. She was very dropsical, and therefore very infirm and helpless; she wept much in her poor, lonely cottage. George had been the housekeeper; had washed and cooked,—and indeed had done all the work.

During his illness, it had been pitiable to see her dragging herself up-stairs on her knees and by the aid of one hand, the other hand bearing a bason of gruel or a cup of tea for the poor, dying man. She was ill-fitted to be a nurse, rather needing to be nursed herself; but she did all she could, and watched him night and day. And now he was gone, and with him the pension was gone! The poor woman was destitute indeed.

But the devoted lady who had been their kind friend before was not wanting now. Mainly through her earnest representations, aided by the valuable and powerful interest of the gentleman who had been so important an agent in obtaining the pension at first, the Tradesmen's Association was led to make a new rule, by which the widows of Pensioners were to continue, without further election, recipients of the benefits of the Fund. So poor Mrs. Snowdon was again mercifully provided for.

She was, however, not long to need the bounty of the Institution. Her disease slowly gained upon her, and she was fully aware of it. The sharpness of temper and somewhat domineering manner, which in her prosperous days had marked her, and which had often doubtless called for much patience and meekness on the part of George, were now gone, and it was truly edifying to see with what perfect submission, nay, glad resignation, she bore all her heavy sufferings. I have never forgot one of her expressions, which she uttered as I was condoling with her after a very trying night. "Ah, I find," she said, "there is only one way; the more I suffer the more I pray, and I go on praying till I get the pain under; *and then, Sir,—the nearer I get to Him the sweeter it is!*"

And so, after months of pain and prayer, of very great weakness, and of the strength which is made perfect in weakness, of suffering and of grace, she also passed away, and George and Alice Snowdon rested together in the same grave.

After we had returned from the cemetery, Miss S——, the dear servant of God and true sister of mercy already referred to, came to me, and handed me a paper, saying that she had written what was in it at Mrs. Snowdon's request, some days before her death.

"Tell Mr.—— that I think there will be sufficient left from the quarter's money to bury me with. I wish him to have the mahogany drawers; George and I never liked to part with them,—we got them when we were married; and also one of my two silver tea-spoons, with my love to him. And then you, Miss S——, must have the other silver spoon for yourself. And then all the other things in the house must be sold and go to the Missionaries; and may the Lord bless everybody, for Jesus Christ's sake."

I have only to add, that in our Missionary receipts of that year, there was an entry as follows:

"*Proceeds of the Sale of the Furniture of the late George and Alice Snowdon*—£1 17*s*. 5*d*."

"Sweet is the memory of the just,
It lives when they are passed away;
It rises from their mouldering dust
A bright flower of eternal day.

"And men will love its fragrant breath
More than the eastern perfumed air,
And long that when they sink in death,
Their memories may bloom as fair."

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 5.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE NEW CURATE.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
LEEDS: W. BRIERLEY, 2, BOND STREET.

One Penny.

THE NEW CURATE.

CHAPTER I.

"Ye, who your Lord's commission bear,
His way of mercy to prepare:
Angels, He calls ye: be your strife
To lead on earth an angel's life."

THE Church affairs of a large parish are quite a world in themselves, and often a very absorbing world. What with services in Church,—which in the parish I am about to speak of came four times every day, along with the administration of Baptism, and Churchings, and the Burial of the Dead, the care of large Day and Sunday Schools, the visiting of the numerous sick, and the relief of the poor, together with the part to be taken in the various Religious Societies,—the minds of those officially connected with the Church were kept in a continual occupation, and their time always found too little in comparison with the duties to be performed.

Let us take an ordinary day. Several of us, who were Curates, lived together in a very simple way, near to the Church with which we were connected. We lived together for the sake both of economy, and of Christian fellowship and support; for we wanted any money which was not needed for our absolute sustenance, to meet the various calls from the sick and poor around us, and we were often greatly tried and perplexed with the cases with which we had to deal, so as to make the counsel of the more experienced a valuable common benefit.

We rose at six, and within a few minutes were assembled for a short service, wherein we blessed God for our preservation through the night, and dedicated ourselves afresh to His service for that day. At half-*past seven*, two of us were at Church, beginning the *arly Morning* Service, which was regularly attended b

a number of earnest souls, both young and old, rich and poor, some of whom came from a considerable distance. Before breakfast we had our own family worship. At nine the day schools had to be opened with prayer, and afterwards religious instruction given to the elder scholars. From school the transition was naturally to the district, where the anxiously expected visits were made until half-past ten, at which hour those of us who had not already been to Morning Prayers had to hasten to Church to take the ordinary forenoon Service, preceded by Marriages and followed by Baptisms and Churchings; while the others continued to visit in their districts. In the afternoon at three, came Baptisms again, with Churchings, and Burials, and full Choral Service; the latter to be repeated at half-past seven, but now only read, for the convenience of working people and others, who could not attend earlier. At the last service in Church, only one curate was usually present, the rest being otherwise fully occupied: some with classes of candidates for confirmation, or of communicants; others at evening schools; but all in one way or other. It was usually ten o'clock before we had wearily reached home, to eat our simple supper, have our night devotions, and go gladly to rest. Such was the life of a Curate in the large parish of ——, as I knew it nearly thirty years ago, and such doubtless is it in many places now. Every day, as it has been shewn, had its full share of work, and Sunday, however sacred, was no Sabbath, being the day least of all the seven a day of rest.

It was one day, at the beginning of the year 1847, when most of the Curates had already assembled in the vestry to be ready for the afternoon Service, a service at which all of us made a point of being present, and which was largely attended also by the laity, that the Vicar entered, accompanied by a gentleman of very striking appearance. He was above the usual height, strongly made, and of good figure, apparently about five and twenty (though really not quite so old as that)

dressed in the mode then adopted by young men of fashionable life, and with somewhat of a foreign air, which latter was accounted for by his having just returned from a lengthened tour on the Continent.

"Let me introduce to you, gentlemen," said the Vicar, "one who is about to become a fellow-worker with us, Mr. ——. He is to be ordained, all being well, in the coming Lent." We looked again at the stranger, and wondered whether the handsome, fashionable young man had formed any correct idea of the life he was about to enter.

However, we said nothing; it was rather a matter for anxious thought and prayer than for words. We learnt that it was his own strong wish, both to be a clergyman, and to begin his new career where there was real work. This latter, coming to our parish, he was sure to have; as to how far he had any real vocation to such a life, that was yet to be seen. Certainly, as he appeared to us that day, few things could seem more unlikely.

CHAPTER II.

"Listen, ye pure, white-robed souls,
Whom in her list she now enrols,
And gird ye for your high emprise,
By these her thrilling minstrelsies."

It is to be regretted that all members of the Church have not the opportunity of witnessing an Ordination Service. Scarcely anything can be more affecting. And if so to others, how much more to those who are then ordained! Long looked forward to, after in most cases years of preparation, the solemn day comes at last. The examinations are over, the concluding private charge of the Bishop has been given the day before, and when the young man awakes that Sunday morning, it is with a feeling almost indescribable. Thankfulness, awe, self-distrust, fear, and faith, all are at work in him; and he will often, as he kneels low in his chamber, feel that this is his only proper attitude before

that God whose more special and sacred service he is about to enter.

And how different the greeting of his fellow-candidates seems this morning; how all speak in an undertone; and he could even fancy that the very people he passes in the streets have a more grave and religious look than usual.

But it is in the Holy place that this high-wrought feeling reaches its highest point. There, as the solemn service resounds through the long aisles of the Cathedral, as the crowded congregation listen to the earnest words of the preacher, setting forth the high dignity, yet most grave responsibility, of the Christian ministry; how it was ordained by Christ himself for the proclamation of His Gospel, and the salvation of those for whom He, the Incarnate God, vouchsafed to die; and concluding by imploring the prayers of all present for those now before them who are about to be set apart for this most weighty charge: as he hears all this, the candidate for this most solemn and important ministry may well feel overawed.

Yet still more affecting does the Service become. The Bishop's voice is heard: "And now again we exhort you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you have in remembrance into how high a dignity, and to how weighty an office and charge ye are called: that is to say, to be Messengers, Watchmen, and Stewards of the Lord; to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever. Have always, therefore, printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His blood. The Church and Congregation, whom you must serve, is His Spouse and His Body."

And then the solemn vows are plighted before God *and the congregation.*

The awful silence for a while to allow the prayers of all to be made for them now follows, broken by that most heavenly strain, sung while the whole congregation,—Bishop, Clergy, Candidates, and people,—are still on their knees :

"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost Thy seven-fold gifts impart.

"Thy blessed Unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight."

The heart of the youthful servant of Jesus Christ is throbbing ; his inmost soul is pleading for mercy and acceptance ; he bows at the feet of the Lord ;—the sign is given,—the hands are placed on his head, the words of Authority and Commission are pronounced ;—and he is an ordained, separated, and solemnly devoted Minister of God for ever !

Can it be wondered at, that such a Service, spiritually rendered, and spiritually approached, involving so many of the highest considerations, and interests so vast, and calculated to affect the profoundest depths of Christian consciousness, should have a great effect upon those who are its peculiar objects ? How many have felt it to be the critical moment of their lives ; how many have had their moral and spiritual nature wholly stirred by it ; and how many, as they have slowly withdrawn from the stately minster, have become one in heart and mind, in vows and entire self-consecration, with the saints and martyrs of former days, have caught the Apostolic spirit, and grasped with all their soul's strength the Banner of the Cross, willing and longing to " spend and be spent for Christ."

Certainly such was the case with W. S. M——, our new Curate.

CHAPTER III.

"Who is God's chosen priest?
He who on Christ stands waiting day and night;—
Who both in agony
Hath seen Him, and in glory, and in both
Own'd Him divine, and yielded, nothing loth,
Body and soul—to live and die."

Now, after many years, in looking back to that time, one can almost see "the beginning of the end," the indications then of the solemn scenes through which our young Curate was to pass.

There was the same lofty, noble bearing; but otherwise all was changed. Never did anyone seek to realise the idea of the sacred calling more than he did. He was the first and the last in all our numerous and heavy engagements, and never appeared to think he had done enough. In our daily duties there was that which tried both mind and body, but he seemed to rejoice in labours which by others were felt to be trying and severe.

The ordination came in Lent, and along with it the additional duties which that solemn season usually brings; and into these special engagements Mr. M—— threw himself with all his heart. It was touching to see the fine, fashionable young gentleman thus transformed into the earnest, unwearied, patient, and gentle minister of Christ, the servant of all; willing to go anywhere and do anything in the discharge of his sacred office.

Then Passion Week came, that most affecting of all seasons of the Christian year, when the Church leads her children day by day to Gethsemane and Calvary, to gaze in amazement, contrition, and love on the Sufferings and Death of the Divine Redeemer.

It was on the Monday afternoon in that week, if I remember rightly, that we were waiting in the vestry previous to the Service, when the conversation turning upon the solemn thoughts connected with the week, *some one made* allusion to the old custom of laying

aside of all ornaments during Passiontide, and of many even putting on mourning apparel.

"In that case," said I, turning to our new Curate, who was listening with great interest to what was passing, "you would have to give up wearing your gold chain."

Now I had all along felt that our young friend, with all his earnestness and great devotion to his new duties, was somewhat inconsistent in retaining this one relic of his former character and appearance. It was a somewhat massive chain to which his watch was attached, and I could not but think that this mark of wealth and consequence would be sadly out of place among the poor, wretched people in the district where our friend had to labour. Moreover, it was not consistent with his calling; for whatever in these days may be the departure from all external badges of clerical profession on the part of some, or the ridiculous ostentatious display of it on the part of others, —even in our outward appearance some regard to the Service we have entered, and some conformity to the Master whom we profess to serve in it, should be observed. Worldly people themselves readily detect inconsistencies of this kind; and though the "good company" Clergyman is welcomed and sought after in circles where Christ is not named, yet he is the last Clergyman for whom these very people would send to visit them on their sick or dying beds!

Now all this is correct, and yet I never look back to the way in which I made reference to our young Curate's gold chain that day in the vestry, without a feeling of compunction. For I saw at once, as we all saw, that it had given him pain. Whether it was that he had not been conscious of the incongruity of the thing, or whether, being in some degree aware of it, he yet felt unwilling to give up this one familiar appendage of former days, I cannot say, but I had evidently touched his feelings in a disagreeable manner. He coloured, looked annoyed, said something about there being no harm in the thing, and then rose hastily as though he

would be ready for the approaching Service,—thus putting a stop to all further remark.

This was Monday in the Holy Week; and the other days came as usual full of their solemn engagements. Again and again was recited the sacred story of the Passion; voices faltered as they read, and hearts were affected as they heard; and the deep, pathetic words of the preacher day by day seeking to enforce the lessons of the Cross fell with increasing weight on the minds and consciences of the hearers. Maunday Thursday, with the Upper Room gathering, and Gethsemane, with its unknown agony; Good Friday, and the darkness and awful abandonment of Golgotha; the great Sabbath, and the sepulchral chamber with the angels' guard: all came, as usual, in their deep solemnity. And then Easter! A great divine has given us these words, which are so true and so weighty they almost might be inspired: "Strictness is the condition of rejoicing." How fully is this proved in the celebration of the Easter triumphs, after a due, and prayerful, and heart-abiding watch by the Cross! Is there any joy like it on earth? I doubt it. Surely the Easter that year was pre-eminently joyful. And we could see afterwards why it should be so.

There was the vast congregation; and the ecstatic cry:

> "Jesus Christ is risen to-day, Alleluia!
> Our triumphant holy day; Alleluia!
> Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia!
> Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!"

And there were the few words of heart-stirring gratulation to the exulting crowd of worshippers; and then the great Communion Feast, with the uplifting of the angelic song, "Glory to God in the highest;" closing with the Benediction as from the Risen Lord Himself, standing triumphant on the great stone rolled away from the empty tomb!

O blessed, blessed Day; Day of Days; Sunday of all Sundays in the year; antepast of Heaven itself! Such was the Easter Day of that eventful year. And yet *there was one* thing especially to be noted. In the

offertory, among the gold and silver of the more wealthy and the coppers of the poor, was found a massive gold chain.

CHAPTER IV.

"There are in this loud stunning tide
  Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide,
  Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

EASTER had passed, and Whitsuntide had followed, with its vast gatherings of Sunday scholars, the crowded display in Church, and, afterwards, the wondrous consumption of buns and of tea. And then we became aware of a very dark cloud which was gathering over us. It was the year of the Irish famine, and as the awful visitation began to press the poor peasantry in their own country, such as were able to do so fled to England, to seek among us a morsel of bread. Our town, from its proximity to the west coast, soon had numerous arrivals of these gaunt, hungered creatures. Tall men, with long coats, and hats without crowns, and women, wild and haggard; with numbers of unearthly looking children,—strange beings that ran alongside of the men and women, and looked at you out of the corners of their eyes, with a sort of half-frightened, half-savage expression. The usual low lodging-houses for this class of people were soon more than full, and they extemporised for themselves dwellings, such as none but they would have occupied. Why the Poor-Law authorities did not bestir themselves in time, and open proper places for the reception of these wretched exiles seems now a strange blunder. They would have said, I suppose, that being Irish they were not legally chargeable to the township, and that therefore they, the Guardians of the Poor, were not bound to expend upon them any of the ordinary Poor-Law relief. But it was a great mistake and a woeful

economy; for the immigrants brought with them not only hunger, but death. In a very short time the frightful Irish fever was epidemic in all the lower parts of the town. It was a dreadful time. We then buried all the pauper dead from the parish church, and I well remember that, on one afternoon, *twenty-three bodies* were lying side by side as I entered the Church to read that part of the Burial Service which is there said. The low howls of the women were terrible. They sat at the grave sides, crouching in their peculiar way, and rocking themselves to and fro, as they looked down into the dark cavities where the dead were lowered five and six deep, one upon another.

As might be supposed, the time was an especially heavy one for the Curates who laboured in that part of the town where these people had settled themselves, and where the fever was raging, and nowhere was this so much the case as in that district which was under the charge of our new Curate and the senior Clergyman with whom he was associated: a most earnest and devoted man who has since gone to his eternal rest. We did what we could, though it was but little in comparison with the magnitude of the calamity. Money was sent us, and we ourselves added all we could. We opened places for the distribution of soup and bread, and sought to stir up the authorities to organise more suitable measures for the relief of the poor famished creatures who were everywhere sickening around us.

"Do go with me, and see a part of my district," said Mr. M——, the new Curate. "I don't think the Workhouse people can know how bad things are." I went with him. It was frightful indeed. In our other districts we all had both the starvation and the fever, but here, in this district, which was one of an especially Irish character, it was simply horrible. Every place, above ground and under ground, was crammed with miserable, famished wretches, scarcely looking like human beings. In one cellar we counted *thirty-one men, women, and children*, all lying on the damp, filthy floor,

with only a few handfuls of straw under them; while the frightened neighbours, who would not venture inside the pestilential depth, were *lowering water in buckets* to allay the intolerable thirst of the miserable people.

Our young Curate was excited to the last degree, so much so that I felt bound to remonstrate with him as to the danger to which he was exposing himself. For not content with seeking to arouse the attention of the relieving officers to the dreadful condition of the poor sufferers, he himself would go down to them in their cellars, or climb up into their close, choking chambers, raise their heads, put fresh straw under them, give them the gruel with his own hands, and though they wanted not his religious ministrations, having their own priests, who to their honour never shrank from their duty, and of whom several laid down their lives in the performance of it, yet his heart was continually going out in labours and benedictions for the wretched sufferers. And when at last temporary hospitals were opened, it was he who brought out the first that were removed, carried them in his own arms, and laid them gently down in the carts which were brought to remove them!

CHAPTER V.

"Wish not, dear friends, my pain away—
Wish me a wise and thankful heart,
With God in all my griefs to stay,
Nor from His loved connection start."

It was indeed an anxious and alarming time, both on account of that which was every day taking place, and from the anticipation of what might yet be to come. One of the medical officers, who had shewn great zeal in the discharge of his duties, was stricken down, and the lives of all who were called to take an active part in ministering to the fever patients, were evidently in jeopardy. It was July, and the weather was very hot.

One morning our young Curate was not at the early *morning* prayers, and this being contrary to his habitual

practice, his colleague in the district and I went straight from Church to his lodgings to enquire the reason. "Mr. M——," said his landlady, "is not very well this morning. He got up, I believe, but has laid down again." We went to him. He complained of his head, and considerable aching in the bones, and of nausea. Contrary to his wish, we sent for a surgeon, who lived hard by; and next day, as he was no better, but rather worse, a physician was called in.

His fellow Curate and I waited below until the two medical men came down stairs. Of course we knew it was the terrible fever. "Gentlemen," said Dr. H——, "this is a very serious case; if the patient has friends within reach, they had better be apprised of his danger, and you, unless you feel bound to come here, had better avoid the house. And we strongly recommend that the sick man be removed from this place at once, and taken into a more wholesome locality."

Medical men sometimes speak without due consideration. Our young Curate had no friends, meaning, by that, relatives, on our side of the Irish Channel; we, who had thus been warned to keep away, were bound to take care of him; and, as for finding any who would receive a fever case into their house, the idea seemed unlikely to the last degree.

What, however, could be done, we were most willing to do; and were soon using every endeavour to find suitable lodgings for our young friend in the outskirts of the town. But, as we had feared, it was altogether vain. No one would for a moment listen to the application; all were panic struck by the frightful epidemic, and, before we could well state our object, there was evidently a strong desire to get us out of their houses, as though our very presence might communicate to them the dreaded contagion.

There was now but one way to effect the object. We might take an empty house, hastily fit it up sufficient for the end in view, and remove the patient thither. And this, by great efforts, we succeeded in doing; and

that very night the sick man was taken, wrapped in the bed clothes,—and his own bed being put into the cab, he was placed upon it, supported by the doctor, the nurse, and his fellow Curate, and so removed to the half-empty dwelling, which was to be his last earthly home.

CHAPTER VI.

"Ah! sooth us, haunt us night and day,
Ye gentle spirits far away,
With whom we shared the cup of grace,—
Then parted;—ye, to Christ's embrace,
We, to the lonesome world again!"

THE house was out in the country, and elevated. It was very quiet, and the fresh air came through the constantly opened window, and if these had been sufficient, he would have recovered. But the fever poison had entered into his blood with all its virulence, and day after day he lay in a sort of half stupor,—hot, thirsty, and with the blackened tongue and rolling eye which accompanies typhus fever. He always, however, appeared conscious when the prayers were said by his bedside, as they were several times daily, generally repeated the responses, and, invariably at the conclusion, asked, "Are the poor people all taken to the hospital yet?" Then, at times, he would be highly excited, wandering and talking about the sick people, and calling for help to get them out of the cellars, and exclaiming against the cruel manner in which they were neglected. At other times he was in Church, beginning the Service, or wanting "to read the Lesson, only that some one had taken the Book away." And then he would relapse again into the comatose state, as the doctors called it, and lie for a while still, seeming wholly unconscious of everything around him.

But it ended. One evening his strength appeared much more prostrated than before, while his mind seemed to have recovered a good deal of clearness and vigour, and he asked the usual question after prayers with still greater earnestness. Having received an

explicit assurance that the poor sufferers were now duly attended to, he murmured, "Thank God;—I am very weary, I should like to die;" and his head, which he had partly raised, sank down heavily on the pillow.

The great bell of the parish church tolled its deep muffled sound as a hearse entered the town from the northern suburbs, and passed through the streets to the station. There a coffin, containing apparently the body of a tall person, was taken out, while three or four Clergymen looked sorrowfully on. The railway truck was opened, and the coffin laid down in it, and the doors were shut. Shortly the signal was given, and all that was earthly of the brave, high-minded, and self-sacrificed young Curate passed away for ever from our view.

A stained-glass window was afterwards placed in the Church with which his brief ministerial life had been connected. It recorded his name, and the date of his death; and, about the same time, a gold chain, for which the value had been paid by his brother Curates, and the amount applied to the relief of the poor fever patients, was sent to his family, as a token of their deep sympathy for the great loss they had sustained, and of their love for the memory of their devoted and lamented young colleague.

And yet, surely, that gold chain was the token of something more! Besides being the expression of human sympathy and sorrow, it bore witness to the severing of the last link which had bound that fine, handsome young man to the world,—the gay and pleasurable world, which would have rejoiced to have kept him; it was the outward and visible sign, as he offered it to the Lord that Easter Day, of the absolute and entire oblation of himself, body and soul, to the service of Christ and His poor, which was so soon to be consummated; and it was also, no doubt, in the sight of the ministering angels, a pledge that the Divine grace, which had impelled him to that act of entire self-consecration, should be followed by the enjoyment of the fulness of the Divine love for ever.

The following passage from the Book of Wisdom may not inappropriately close this brief Memoir :—

"For the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

"In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery:

"And their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace.

"For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality.

"And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded; for God proved them, and found them worthy for Himself.

"As gold in the furnace hath He tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering.

"And in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble.

"They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever.

"They that put their trust in Him shall understand the truth: and such as be faithful in love shall abide with Him; for grace and mercy is to His saints, and He hath care for His elect."

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 6.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE GERMANY MAN;

AND

CONFIRMATION.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
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One Penny.

"THE GERMANY MAN."

"And took his journey into a far country."—St. Luke xv. 13.

SOME years ago, I was in want of a person to assist in teaching a few young people who were under my care the elements of Greek and Latin, also French and German. After a little enquiry, one was recommended to me who was stated to be an excellent teacher, and well suited for my purpose. It was added, that his terms were very moderate.

I accordingly saw him; and it ended in an engagement, by which he was to give to the pupils I should entrust to him a lesson of one hour every day. The place where they were to meet was a house adjoining the Church. We will go thither, and try to make his acquaintance, and see if we can get to know something more about him. For, if I am not mistaken, he is worth our study.

It is a somewhat dismal neighbourhood to which we bend our steps, and down this churchyard it looks more like a prison-court than anything else; at the bottom is the house where we are to find the tutor and his pupils.

We ask at the door, and the housekeeper answers that the "Germany Man," as she always styles him, is inside; and so we enter,—and there he is!

With several youths around him at the table, sits a man of slender figure, shabbily dressed. His head is *bent close* to the book which he holds in his hand, for

he is excessively short-sighted; and occasionally you hear him, in a very gentle voice, and with patient tone, speak in terms of correction or approval as he criticises the exercises of his pupils, or hears them construe. But the door opens, and he looks up. What a striking face!—so refined, so highly intellectual, so thin, so pale. And when he returns our salutation, how sweet a smile comes over the otherwise melancholy countenance! You say, what a gentleman he is, and yet how shabby is his appearance!

It was long before I learnt all that I now know of "the Germany Man," and our intercourse, though continued for about seven years, was never marked by much communicativeness on his part as to his life and past history. It became a very sad history during that intercourse.

A. Z—— was a native of a large well-known town in Silesia, and was brought up for the Roman Catholic priesthood. In due time, he went to the University of Bonn, and passed through the usual course of study. What interfered so as to prevent his purpose of becoming a priest, or what brought him to England, he never told. Sometimes I thought it was because he had become sceptical in his religious opinions, at other times I suspected he had been obliged to leave Germany on account of his politics, for he was a great Liberal; it might be that both conjectures were correct.

Soon after the commencement of his engagement, I frequently asked him to come and see me, and on these visits nothing could be more interesting and attractive than his conversation and deportment. He was remarkably well-informed on all subjects; science, history,

politics, and theology, were all alike to him,—and he always expressed himself as a man who had thought and observed with unusual intelligence and care. He was, moreover, peculiarly winning in his deportment, combining the decided assertion of his views with the greatest courtesy of manner, and readiness to attend to the opinions of others.

"And there wasted his substance. . . . And he began to be in want."—St. Luke xv. 13, 14.

But the intercourse was not long so pleasant. Symptoms were manifested after a while, which, whatever other causes there might be for his poor appearance and circumstances, gave one sad and sufficient explanation of them. The poor fellow, with all his refinement, his high intellectual powers, his extensive attainments and information, his gentle and winning deportment, was a drunkard! Not that he was always so; like many others who have suffered from that terrible propensity, he was at times, and for weeks or months together, altogether satisfactory; regular in meeting his pupils, and most valuable in his work. But then for a while he would be missing; and when he appeared again, making some evasive excuse, his face and his manner too truly declared the melancholy cause of his absence.

And so we went on; things on the whole getting worse. Clothes given to him, after being worn awhile, were seen no more; money lent was not repaid; his appearance was now not only shabby, but his person became filthy, owing to the kind of quarters he had to make his lodging-place. It became a difficult question *to know* what to do.

Kind remonstrances were offered, appeals to his better nature made; very long-suffering was exhibited towards him, but all in vain; still he grew worse and worse. Poor fellow! he was actually twice in prison, sent there for being found by the police drunk in the streets. Yet we took him back.

However, in the early spring of 1868 things seemed at extremity. His health was gone, he suffered from a racking cough; he was fearfully emaciated. Then he was taken and put into clean and comfortable lodgings, under the care of a respectable widow, and with kind Christian people hard by, ready to render help for both body and soul. Every one expected that he was going to die.

But to the surprise of all, and thanks to the kind care with which he was nursed, and to the skill of the good doctor who regularly attended him, he rallied, and after two or three months began to look quite a new man. He now said he would go home and see his mother in Germany; a resolution which we strongly encouraged. A former pupil could obtain for him, he said, a free passage from Hull to Hamburg, and depending on this statement the needful money for the other expenses of the journey was handed over to him. The day was fixed, and all seemed hopeful. Alas! on the evening before, he went out of his lodgings, and came back intoxicated. And so he continued his sad career again, until the money for the journey was all gone.

It now seemed a duty to stop, and his further applications for aid were refused, as it was thought that more money would turn to more drink, and that *starvation* was better than continued intoxication.

And starvation came. There were some of his old friends who when they met him still rendered him a little help, but his employment was gone, and those who saw him gave painful accounts of his increasing emaciation and his lost condition.

At last he himself sought out one of his former pupils,—one who ever had been much attached to him, and one who had earnestly desired both his temporal and spiritual welfare,—and his request now was, that he should be got into the workhouse.

This was evidently the best thing to be done; and so the application was made for him, and the same true friend took him in a cab to that his last lodging on earth, except the grave.

"He came to himself."—St. Luke xv. 17.

He went into the workhouse only to die; he knew that, but was thankful to go, and most thankful afterwards that he had gone. For there, in the infirmary, he had cleanliness, quiet, a comfortable bed, and a fire in the ward night and day,—a specially needed comfort in his state, which he gratefully appreciated.

There we sought to minister to him in such ways as the rules of the place allowed, and there came the earthly reward of all our previous efforts for his good.

How shall I describe the peace and serenity which gradually took possession of that worn heart and brain! As he said, "I am just like one awoke out of a long and heavy dream. I cannot understand however I could *be what I was*; it seems a mystery to me."

I was bending over him one day, and said amongst other things,—"You seem to be quite calm, and have no fear." His fine features, fine and most striking yet, though so dreadfully pale and emaciated, lighted up with a joyful animation as he exclaimed,—"Oh, Sir, I have been altogether happy since I lost that dreadful fear." "I suppose," I said, "you allude to the fear of death, do you not?" "Oh, no," was the reply, "I never was afraid of death; perhaps I ought to have been, but I never was." "You mean, then, the fear of judgment and the condemnation for sin?" "No, sir, I do not mean that. I am sure that Jesus Christ died for sinners, and that His merits are sufficient to ensure the pardon of the vilest who come to Him by faith and penitence. I can trust myself with Him, for I am sure I am penitent, and do rest wholly on His death." "What, then, could that great fear be, which you say you suffered so much from?" He answered, with an earnestness of tone that excited the attention of the other sick ones, who were laid on their beds in the room,—"*Sir, it was the fear of getting well again. It was dreadful to think that possibly I might live and go back to my old life; and rather than that should be, I would die here in agony a hundred times.*"

Poor, dear fellow! the deliverance was come at last, —and it was complete.

He died on the third day after this conversation; having been seen and ministered to by devout Christians from amongst us on each intervening day.

His departure took place on the Saturday; and on Tuesday, at noon, a funeral of the most simple character was seen emerging from the dead-ward of the work-

house. Four young men carried on their shoulders a plain black coffin; three Christian ladies, and a like number of the other sex, walked behind as mourners; while waiting for them at the gate of the cemetery stood the Pastor, ready to begin the solemn Office for the Burial of the Dead.

In the Chapel they rested a while; there the psalms were said, and the lessons read, and a few sentences said upon the love of Jesus, which leads those who belong to Him to know no difference of race or country, but to include every soul of man within the sphere of its sympathies, and the exercise of its offices of tenderness and pity.

After this, but one short solemn walk, and then, amongst the dead ones who lay around, most of whom had belonged to the same Christian flock as did those who now stood there, his four pupils who had brought him from the stone table in the dead-room of the workhouse laid down "The Germany Man" in his English grave.

Tears stood in every eye; it was a touching time; one never to be forgotten. We thought of what he had been, and of what he might have been; and we were sad. But we looked up in faith and hope, for we knew that the mercy of our dear Lord was unfathomable!

On the gravestone where he lies, is carved:

A—— Z——,

Died December 19th, 1868,

Aged 37 Years.

"The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he *may not* die in the pit."—ISAIAH li. 14.

A SHORT time after the first edition of this little narrative was issued from the press, the writer received by post the following letter. The evidence thus so unexpectedly supplied, will serve to enforce the lessons which the tract was intended to convey.

"REV. SIR, "LEEDS, *February 25th*, 1869.

"The touching narrative of 'The Germany Man' has accidentally fallen into my hands, and I have perused it with mingled feelings of sorrow and joy—sorrow to think that such great talents as he was possessed of should have been so long perverted—and joy to know, as I do, that he was at last brought, through grace, to rely on the merits of our blessed Lord for pardon.

"A severe attack of dysentery caused me to be laid on a bed in the same room with poor Z—— when you last visited him, to which allusion is made in the narrative, when he expressed his unwillingness to go back into the world lest, as he implied, he should again fall into temptation. As I was beside him when he died, it has occurred to me that one or two instances which I noticed, and which I think evince the fulness of his reliance on the atonement of the blood of the Lamb, up to the last moment of consciousness, would be acceptable to his Christian friends.

"The evening previous to his death a good lady visited him, and spoke some kind words, bringing to his notice that beautiful hymn, 'Rock of Ages! cleft for me,' the whole of which she repeated, and then remarked that it was a favourite hymn of his countryman, the late good Prince Albert. The recital of the hymn seemed to have a consoling influence on him, as he listened to

it with calm ecstasy. Indeed it affected more than poor Z——. The sweet thrilling accents and fervent manner in which that good lady repeated the words, touched an obdurate heart, and caused silent tears to flow from eyes that had been long unused to such manifestations of Christian feeling. About half an hour before poor Z—— died, he raised his wasted arm at full length, and pointed diagonally upwards, as long as his extreme weakness would admit, twice exclaiming, 'There!—there!' a bright smile lighting up his pale face all the time. Soon after he became quite still, his breathing gradually becoming more and more difficult, but still smiling and gazing upwards, until at last, after a few long inspirations, at about 11 p.m. his spirit took its flight to the God that gave it.

"I beg to request that you will be pleased to refrain from inquiring (should you feel so disposed) regarding the writer of this, as I am desirous of remaining unknown for private reasons; my only object in writing being to furnish the foregoing instances of the fulness of FAITH manifested in poor Z——'s last moments, thinking they would be acceptable to those kind Christians whose timely visits and good ministrations brought, through grace, peace and comfort to a dying stranger in a strange land. 'God is not unrighteous that he will forget your works and labour that proceedeth of love, which love you have showed for His name's sake.'

"I am, Rev. Sir,

"With unfeigned respect,

"Your humble servant,

"THE WRITER."

CONFIRMATION.

—o—

IT was a fine morning in May; the sun shone brightly on the lofty white houses, and busy streets of Frankfort; here and there were seen groups of boys and girls moving along, evidently dressed in their holiday attire, the girls peculiarly conspicuous by their white dresses, and both sexes by the garlands or bouquets of beautiful flowers which they wore.

I drew in my head from the window of our sitting-room whence I had been surveying the spectacle, and seeing that others had by this time come into the room, said, "I am sure there is something special on foot; what can be the meaning of all these young people in the streets this morning, and dressed in this manner?" A gentleman, with large sandy whiskers and moustaches, who was closely engaged in cutting slices of ham at the breakfast table and distributing to the various expectants sundry rolls of 'milch brod,' as the Germans on account of it being made with milk, call their best bread, answered without suspending his operations, "Oh, it is a Confirmation, I dare say; just now the Confirmations are taking place almost every day at some place or other. I noticed the Jews were having theirs as I passed their synogogue yesterday; the Roman Catholics had theirs last Sunday; this to-day will probably

be a Lutheran one." "Indeed," I said, "I should like to see it, will you inquire for me where it is to take place, and if I may be allowed to attend?" The reader will perceive from this that I was then only a stranger in that part of the world, and needed an interpreter and go-between in my intercourse with the good German people, and in gaining a knowledge of their ways and doings.

The inquiry was made, and the information elicited was that the Confirmation was to be at the Katerina Kirche, and that anyone who chose might be present.

Accordingly I went; but the Confirmation having been fixed at an earlier hour than I had been told, I found on my arrival at the Church that the service had already commenced. Perhaps as my readers may wish to know what a Lutheran Church in Germany is like, I will try to describe the one I was just entering. It was a large Gothic structure, evidently built at different periods, and much altered from its original form. Two huge galleries, one above the other, went round three sides of the building; in one of them rose a vast organ, whilst all round the front of these galleries was painted in the panels a series of scenes and events from the Old and New Testament histories. The galleries on this occasion, however, were untenanted except by the organist.

In the middle of the vacant side of the Church was the pulpit, and close to it, but lower, a place like the reading-desks in our Churches, occupied during the ordinary services by the precentor, a person whose duty it is to lead the singing. But the pulpit and the desk like the galleries were now empty. The minister

was at the altar, which stood at the east end of the Church, in front of one of the galleries. Behind it was a large and richly carved screen rising up to a great height, with a painting of our Blessed Lord in the centre; the whole profusely adorned with beautiful festoons and bouquets of flowers. The rails of the altar with other parts of the Church were also decorated with flowers, and these, with the wreaths worn by the females on their heads, and the nosegays carried by the youths on their coats, made the sacred place look almost like a conservatory.

At the front of the altar and all down the body of the Church were the candidates, the youths seated on one side and the girls on the other, whilst on the elevated benches round the walls were the parents and friends.

But I did not observe all this at first, for as I entered the congregation was singing, and so entranced was I with the strain that it was some time before I could collect my mind to mark the spectacle before me. Never I thought had I heard such solemn soul-touching chords, and as towards the end of the stanza the tune rose into a sort of triumphant swell, in which the younger voices became predominant, it seemed to lift the soul from earth to heaven; a strain was it that might well suit young champions of the Cross, sounding forth their high devotion to the Lord, their determination to follow Him even unto death, and their utter casting off the thraldom of sin and Satan.

But the chorale ceased, and then there came a long prayer by the minister and a long address to

the candidates, and another hymn sung, not as effective as the first, and then the Confirming of the young people took place. The minister standing in front of the altar called out two names, as might be thus, "Conrad Steinbelt and Rudolph Blüm," on which two youths rose up from their seats in the body of the Church, and taking each other's hands, walked up slowly to the rails, and there kneeling down before the minister, he kneeling also, and putting his hands upon their heads, said,—

"RECEIVE the Holy Ghost, to be sheltered and defended from all evil, strengthened and empowered for every thing good, from the gracious Hands of the Omnipotent God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*"

After this he gave to each of them a verse of Scripture or a verse of a hymn, to be their motto for their future life, and they returned to their places. Two others were then called up, and the same ceremony gone through, and they retired, and so on till all the candidates had received the ordinance. The service concluded with another address, a prayer, and benediction.

As I returned slowly home from the Church, pondering over all I had seen and heard, I could not but feel how great a matter for thankfulness it was to find the rite of Confirmation held in such high esteem in Germany, as I found it everywhere was, having no doubt that to the extent in which it was administered and received in faith and love it would be attended with God's rich blessing.

The heavenly strains of that hymn, however, were *something* far beyond anything I had ever heard at

any English Confirmation; and very anxiously did I wish that our young people at home knew such tunes, and sung them like those happy, sweet-looking young people I had seen that day.

"What hymn were they singing as we entered?" I inquired of my companion as we returned home; "I wish you would give me a prose translation in English, and I will try to put it into stanzas, and so take it home to my dear young people in England, and get them to sing it to the same beautiful music as we have just now heard in the Church."

Well,—the prose translation was made, and the following is the form it took; and if my readers ever sing it I hope they will sing it to the same beautiful German chorale I heard it sung to, and that the same elevating, soul-purifying feelings may be excited in their hearts as were excited in mine, when I first heard it sung on that lovely May-day, in the Church of St. Catherine, in Frankfort.

STEEP and thorny is the way
  Leading on to our perfection,
Yet who tread it blest are they,
  Fighting under Christ's direction:
He, who to the end shall press,
Oh! how great his blessedness!

How exceeding his reward
  Whom the world nor pleasure moveth,
But to God his sole regard,
  Soul and body all devoteth:
Hope with him hath heavenward flown,
Looking for the conqueror's crown!

ANN COWMAN.

CHAPTER I.

"What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?"—MATTHEW vi. 31.

I WONDER whether my readers know the town of S——, and that part of Yorkshire in which it is situated. If they do, they will not require any description of it from me, for both town and neighbourhood possess too many striking features to be easily forgotten. But as it is more than probable that all who read this may not have been in the locality which my narrative refers to, I think it will be well that I should preface my account of her of whom I am going to speak with a short description of the place where she lived.

I knew S—— before the days of railroads, and when there were better opportunities of becoming acquainted with the scenery and familiar features of a town than the sudden check of the train and the two or three moments' pause in front of the station-house, sometimes placed in a deep cutting, now allow of.

I well remember the old *Union* coach, which, on its way to the Lake District, for so many years performed its regular and sedate progress through S——; and there at the comfortable inn changed horses, and gave time for the passengers to alight and dine, all to the no small interest and edification of a number of little boys, who stood in the road, waiting to be run over, and of a few shopkeepers, who, having nothing else to do, stood at their shop doors, with their aprons on, and their hands in their pockets, giving their decided sanction to the interesting event taking place.

Some miles before reaching S—— the road, shining with its white limestone, passes along the foot of a range of somewhat considerable hills, and winding on, with a canal on one side and the river at a little distance on

the other, gives the traveller no notice that he is close to S——, until by a sudden turn he finds himself looking at a large new church, built (as he is aware, if he be a judge of architecture) in no despicable manner. There is a well-proportioned tower, and nave, and aisles, and chancel. The nave has a clerestory, and the whole, but for the newness of the stone, looks more like an old church than the less substantial ones of modern days. Of that church we shall stop for one moment to speak. It was mainly the munificent offering to God of one of the most devout and consistent of Churchmen, one who united great learning with the most practical and unostentatious benevolence.

The coach now enters the main street, and deposits its load at the same comfortable inn of which we spoke. The better portion of the passengers (meaning by that term those who have most money in their pockets, or are most willing to spend it) quickly surround the dinner-table, whilst the others make their way to the tap, to solace themselves with a glass of beer and some bread and cheese.

But we will suppose that our inquisitive passenger has no mind for dining (or no money to spend), and prefers giving the half-hour allowed by the coachman to seeing something of the town, rather than to refreshment. And so he saunters up the main street, which he finds (it being market-day) is the market-place also. Large droves of cattle are waiting for customers; farmers' wives with baskets of butter, and eggs, and poultry, throng the footways; whilst sturdy yeomen are standing at the fronts of the public-houses, discussing in no very subdued voices the price of corn and other important subjects of the day. Through all these our traveller makes his way, and the more eagerly as he becomes aware that stretching across the top of the street is an ancient castellated structure of considerable size, with a fine old church close to it, both strongly inviting a nearer inspection. They are, in fact, the castle and ancient parish church of S——; the one the place

where the proud and formidable Lords Clifford lived, the other where, after all their fighting and ambition, they lie quietly mouldering into the same kind of dust as other people.

The traveller surveys with interest the long irregular pile which forms the castle, with its massive round towers proudly guarding the entrance. He enters into the quadrangle, and gazes on the mullioned windows and the pleasant flower-beds and shrubberies beneath, and as he leaves reads the inscription over the gateway, and the quaint motto, "Desormais," formed in the balustrade on the roof.

He has then just time to look into the church, the door of which is fortunately open, see the tombs of the Cliffords beside the altar, and give a glance at the valuable old library in the vestry, and then hurrying back, reaches the inn just as the coachman is calling out for "the young gentleman who should be on the box."

But there are many other objects of interest about S—— besides the castle and the churches, and the market people, and the coach passing through daily, important in the eyes of the gentry and commonalty of S—— as all these naturally are. There are the pleasant walks in the castle woods and up to the top of the moors, and to that fine hill, called "Sharper" from its pointed summit which commands so extensive and beautiful a view; and there is the quiet stroll to Carleton, and many other pleasant paths and lanes besides, all which I knew so well.

And yet more interesting to me than the old castle and its shady walks and deep secluded fish-ponds; and the vast quarries further on, with their wondrous excavations, where the rumbling of the frequent blast is heard, and the workmen hide themselves from the flying rock; or the breezy moor sides, with their heathery carpet, and the grouse's startled cry; or even than the quiet lanes which I loved, when weak and feeble I feared to encounter the hills, and my dear friend came to my room and tempted me out by the attraction of his

society and the support of his arm, and we wandered on, beguiling the way by converse interesting to us both, but especially on the condition and fortunes of the Church of God, and the duties and responsibilities of her children;—yes, pleasanter even than all this were the visits I paid to the peaceful, heaven-like chamber of ANN COWMAN.

CHAPTER II.

"He weakened my strength in the way."—PSALM cii. 23.

HOW well I remember my first visit to ANN COWMAN! Often had I heard my dear friend speak of her as one in whom he was much interested; and often, when returning from our daily walk, had he separated the sooner from me to turn down by the canal bridge to the back lane in which she lived; but it was some time after I had thus become acquainted with her by report that I had the privilege of seeing her.

Yes, privilege indeed it was to know her; one of those privileges the exceeding fulness and meaning of which we never understand at the time, but which are better known and realised years afterwards, and perhaps most in a time of sickness or despondency, or exceeding loneliness.

"I have often thought I should like you to go with me to see ANN COWMAN," said my friend to me one day, "and she has heard me speak of you, and will therefore not be unprepared for a visit from you. I wish you would go."

"I am quite willing," I replied, "if you think the visit of a stranger to her would not be a wrong intrusion." My friend assured me it would not; and so we proceeded together, it being the hour when he made his usual daily pastoral call upon her.

ANN lived, as I have already said, down by the canal-side. Her father had been a boatman, but was now too old and too infirm for his former employment and *was mainly* supported by the labour of such of

children as still remained at home with him and their mother. He spent his time principally by the fireside, trying to decipher some book from his shelf, except when the prayers were said at the new church hard by, and then Andrew generally formed one of the small congregation that assembled within its walls.

It was a disagreeable locality. Near, on one side, was the almost stagnant canal, whilst on the other was a sort of broad, shallow stream, half sewer, half brook, which in warm weather could not in any way improve the sanitary condition of the neighbourhood. On our left was a long row of stone houses, the door of one of which, near the bottom of the lane, my friend opened. It was the usual cottage of that part of the country. On the ground floor was the kitchen, or "house" as it is termed, where the family lived and where all the domestic occupations were performed, and from which the stone steps ascended to the only bedroom in the house. There was nothing particular about the lower apartment. Mrs. Cowman, a tall, hardy-looking person, was busily engaged in washing, and the house, though not dirty, was consequently somewhat in disorder. We ascended the stairs; but how shall I describe that room and its occupant? Hitherto the house had been like any other house, and the people like any other people; but that chamber and she who lay there were very different to the ordinary world—so different that I never even now think of them, and glide in memory to the well-known seat by the bed-side, but a sort of calm, heaven-like feeling comes over me, and I feel that "it is good to be there."

The room we entered was, as my readers will have understood, the ordinary-sized bedroom of the cottagers, with the simple whitewashed walls and usual unenclosed landing-place of the stairs. But was there ever so clean a room as Ann Cowman's? And then the bed, with its snow-white linen, and the little table at the bed-head with the small pile of books, and the nosegay of flowers brought by kind and Christian hands, and the

plate with the biscuit or the two or three grapes, these also the gifts of loving sympathy—and lastly, ANN herself!

Let my readers conceive the appearance of a female, apparently from twenty-five to thirty years of age (she was really ten years older than that at the time I speak of), reclining in bed, her shoulders and head supported by a pile of pillows. She has a cap on, but over it a muslin kerchief, which comes down under her chin, and passes round her neck to be fastened behind. The countenance is perfectly colourless; the features not peculiarly regular or prepossessing, excepting for the wondrous and perfect repose which rests upon them. She has spectacles on; and before her, lying open upon a small cushion, is one of the large Christian Knowledge Society's Prayer-books. Her head has dropped forward, her eyes are closed, her finger is resting upon the Prayer-book,—she is apparently asleep.

"Look well round the room and at her," said my friend, "she will be herself directly." "But she is asleep, is she not?" said I. He shook his head in a significant manner, and without replying further, sat down in a chair that was placed ready at the bed-side, and took up the Prayer-book from before her. Following my friend's direction, I again surveyed the room, marked its beautiful cleanliness, its simple articles of furniture; the books, the flowers, the two or three Scripture prints on the walls; the little window, through which the beams of the evening sun were slanting in, and lighting up the walls, and resting on the shrouded form on the bed. The room seemed to be full of soft, mellow light; the reclining figure one of radiant repose! But there was now a slight motion in the sleeper. The right hand was lifted up from the cushion, where it had been resting, and passed slowly over the chest, the operation being several times repeated; at the same time the air of repose on the face gave way to an expression of severe suffering; the lips were convulsively pressed together, the brow bent, the cheeks flushed, and

there was a deep heaving of the chest, followed by long and heavy sighs. This continued about a minute or two, and then the eyes opened for a moment, looking glassy and fixed, and then shut again. Again they opened, and slowly began to assume expression, and as they did so the convulsive motions ceased. Turning her head, she now saw my friend, and if the former appearance of heavenly calm on her features was something indescribable, who shall paint the ecstatic smile that glowed over her whole countenance as she became aware of the presence of her visitor! It was indeed the perfect, beaming expression of holy Christian love.

My friend spoke to her. He said "I have brought you a visitor, and I have told him that you would be glad to see him." At this she turned her head towards where I was, and the smile was again something I cannot describe to my readers; at the same time the lips uttered a sound like the gentle chirping of a bird. "That is ANN's mode of bidding you welcome," said my friend; "you are glad to see him, are you not?" he added, turning to her. Again she smiled in her peculiar manner, and uttered the same chirping note, and put her hand a little out for me to receive. I took it into my own, and whilst observing the entire bloodless hue of the soft tapering fingers, I became aware that they were gradually stiffening and turning rigid, and then looking at her face saw that she had sunk again into the same state of apparent deep slumber in which she was when we entered the room. "What is the meaning of this?" I said, "has my coming excited her too much?" "Oh, no!" was my friend's reply, "it is not your coming that has caused it; I will tell you all when we go away; but now I must be ready to read to her when she recovers, for our time is passing on." I listened, and gazed on the poor invalid with painful interest, and again in a minute or two observed the same process of returning consciousness as before. After appearing entirely as one dead,—no colour, not the slightest motion, no breathing whatever, all calm,

fixed, as though she had entered on that last sleep which knows no waking,—after being thus for a minute or two, at the most not more than three minutes, the hand again was passed over the chest, the convulsive heavings commenced, the deep sighs followed, and then the returning consciousness. My friend at once began to read a Psalm, and afterwards, kneeling down, said the first part of the prayers in the Visitation Service, concluding with the blessing, "Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit thee," &c. Before he had quite concluded she had again swooned, and we left her in a state of insensibility.

"I think ANN seems much as usual," said my friend to Mrs. COWMAN as we passed through the room below. "Yes, sir," returned she, looking up from her washing-tub, "there be little alterations in her; she keeps about the same, poor thing!"

And so we walked away; and then I at once began to ask about ANN, and begged my friend to fulfil his promise, and give me her history.

CHAPTER III.

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons."
—HEB. xii. 6, 7.

THE following is about the substance of the information my friend gave me:—

"ANN," he said, "was brought up here in S—— much as other girls are, but had the great advantage of being at the school of Mr. ——, the gentleman who gave most of the money for the building of the new church. For many years Mr.—— has had a school of his own, where a limited number of poor children of both sexes are very carefully taught under his inspection, and where their religious instruction is especially attended to. There ANN was known for the regular attendance and the steady progress which she made, as well as for the regularity and propriety of her conduct

In due time she left the school, and, like most of the young people of S——, went to work at the cotton-mills, still continuing a regular attendant at church and Sunday-school. Either from original weakness of constitution, or from the confinement of the factory, or perhaps from both causes, symptoms of ill-health began to display themselves when she was about twenty-three years old, and, after struggling for some time against the increasing weakness and inability for labour, she was obliged to desist and resort to medical advice. As the disorder baffled the medical skill of the place, she was sent by benevolent people to the Infirmary at Manchester; but from thence had to be discharged without being cured. After this she was removed to a similar institution at Leeds, and there remained a considerable time; but this also was in vain, and she was at length carried back to S——, still more under the power of the disease than before. She now became gradually weaker and weaker. She lost the use of her left side entirely; then her speech wholly went and the swooning commenced, increasing to such an extent that at length she was night and day always either swooning or recovering from the swoon, just in fact as we have now seen her.

"In this state she has continued nine years! She eats scarcely anything; the smallest possible portion of food satisfies—a spoonful of jam, or a biscuit, or a grape. She cannot assist herself in the least. She has to make signs, or else convey by the motion of her lips what it is she wants or wishes to say; and as her sisters have to go to work at the mill, and her mother is generally engaged below, she is necessarily left alone for many hours together. To add to her affliction, whilst her complaint makes her peculiarly susceptible of cold, and she suffers greatly from it, she cannot, owing to the chimney in the bedroom smoking very much, have a fire even in the severest weather, for, with her difficult *respiration*, it would be hard to say which would be the *most* insupportable to her, the cold or the smoke.

"And thus she passes her time. She has books, as you saw, which have been given to her by the few kind friends whom pity has drawn to her room, and these books, in the intervals of her swoons, are a great relief and comfort to her. But above all, her Bible and Prayer-book are her chief solace, and she is never tired of poring over them, or in having them read to her; and it is partly in the hope that you may be induced, whilst you are staying here, to go and spend a little time in reading to her that I was led to ask you to accompany me to her room to-day.

"Then there are one or two kind female visitors, who, besides reading to her, carry her flowers, which she prizes very much. It is a great pleasure to see how her eyes beam, and her lips utter their peculiar chirpings, when a fresh little nosegay is placed on the table by her side. That little table is indeed all the world of furniture to her, beyond the bed on which she lies. It holds her books, her flowers, her little pot of jam, the biscuit, or the fruit, which form the main part of her subsistence; and then at times it serves a still higher purpose, for once in every month it is used for celebrating the sacrament of her Saviour's Body and Blood. How much she values that holy ordinance, and enters into the spirit of it, I shall not attempt to say, nor how thankfully she receives all my visits to her. Since my first coming to this place I have made a point of going daily to her, and of reading and saying prayers by her bedside; and I can truly say that no portion of my time is more blessedly spent, so far as regards myself, than what I spend with her. It ever does me good to go to her room and gaze upon her mild and peaceful face, and see the beaming ecstacy of her eye when I pray with her or speak of Him who ever chasteneth those whom He loveth, and scourgeth every one whom He receiveth. Yes; she is indeed a wonderful creature. I declare to you, my friend, that I do firmly believe that if there is a truly happy being on earth—*one who knows* no care and fears no evil, one whose

soul is truly possessed with hidden joy, and enjoys the peace which passeth all understanding, who has begun heaven upon earth, and is tasting already of the happiness of the world to come—it is the apparently poor, miserable, afflicted creature you have just left."

CHAPTER IV.

"Let the saints be joyful with glory, let them rejoice in their beds."—PSALM cxlix. 5.

SUCH was my friend's recital; and, as my readers will suppose, it did not tend to diminish the deep interest which the subject had already excited in me. I readily complied with his wish that I should visit ANN and spend some time daily in reading to her; and it was not long before I was fully at home with her, and I believe she was very willing to receive my visits. Besides her Bible and Prayer-book she had two or three other books to which she was particularly partial. One of these, a sweet little book entitled *Thoughts of Peace*, she often desired me to read to her.

I have now, as I write these memorials of her, the very copy she used lying before me, with all the little threads hanging out which yet mark where her favourite passages were to be found. The book is the production of one who was herself a sufferer, and is a selection of texts of Scripture sentences for the sick and the afflicted, each portion of Holy Writ followed by a stanza or stanzas of a hymn or other sacred poetry. I open the book now by one of these strings and find that it marks the following:—

"PSALM xxiii. 4.—Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

"Oft when death's awful, gloomy vale
Affrighted nature dreads to see,
What thoughts would then my heart assail
Did I not hope, O Lord, in Thee?
But I can never, never sink,
My faith a wreck can never be;
Calmly I stand on Jordan's brink,
While, Lord, I firmly trust in Thee."

I open again by another string, and I find this :—

"PSALM cxix. 28.—My soul melteth for heaviness; strengthen Thou me according unto Thy word.

"Let not thy heart despond, and say—
'How shall I bear this trying day?'
He has engaged, by firm decree,
That 'as thy day thy strength shall be.'

Thy faith is weak, thy foes are strong,
Perhaps the conflict may be long;
Yet shall at last thy sorrow flee,
And 'as thy day thy strength shall be.'

When death itself appears in view,
Christ's presence shall thy fears subdue;
He comes to set thy spirit free,
And 'as thy day thy strength shall be.'"

Here is also another, to which I find a pencil-mark made by myself, doubtless because it was one which was peculiarly dear and touching to her:—

"GAL. iv. 6.—Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.

"Know, my soul, thy full salvation,
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station
Something still to do or bear.
Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
Think what Father's smiles are thine;
Think that Jesus died to save thee;
Child of heaven, canst thou repine?"

I ought to have said that it was by means of her books she carried on conversation with others—conversation such as it was. For instance, I remember at my first visit to her I spoke in terms of commiseration of her state as one very painful and trying. On hearing me, she pointed with her finger to this very book, which lay on the little table by her side, and signified that she wanted it. Then turning over the leaves by the strings, she found the following passage, and gave it to me as her reply to what I had just said:—

"PSALM cxix. 75, 76.—I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. Let, I pray Thee, Thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant.

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No trav'ller ever reached that blest abode
Who found not thorns and briars on his road.
For He who knew what human hearts would prove,
How slow to learn the dictates of His love;
That, hard by nature and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still;
In pity to the souls His grace designed,
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
Call'd for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, 'Go spend them in the vale of tears.'"

During the time I was staying at S—— I was, as would appear from the beginning of my narrative, in weak health; and, besides this, I was called upon to bear at that time very severe and heavy trials. ANN was made acquainted with this, and the first time afterwards that I was with her, she pointed out the following poetry as expressing what she wished to say to me:—

"'Tis when we feel our strength is fled,
That health we cannot know again,
Then, then the tears our loved ones shed
Are seen indeed with heartfelt pain.
We soon must part; we never may
Watch in our turn their suffering hours,
Nor aught of that fond love repay
Which shed such sweetness over ours.
But not forgotten or unknown
The slightest trial we can feel,
By Him who left His Father's throne
His people's griefs to know and heal.
Turn to His word, find comfort there,
Nor mourn thine utter helplessness;
Their anxious thought, their tender care,
Will God Himself reward and bless."

On visiting her one day I found her more than usually ill. Her spasms were very severe, and the throbbing of her head so great that the veins rose thick upon her forehead and temples. In one of the intervals between her swoons I expressed somewhat anxiously a wish that she might be speedily relieved from her excessive suffering. I shall never forget the touching look with which she turned and pointed to the following passage:—

"JOB ii. 10.—Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

"Wish not, dear friends, my pain away,
Wish me a wise and thankful heart,
With God in all my griefs to stay,
Nor from His loved correction start.
The dearest offering He can crave,
His portion in our souls to prove,
What is it to the gift He gave.
The only Son of His dear love."

And then added this one also:—

"PSALM lvii. 1.—Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in Thee: yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

"In life's long sickness evermore
Our thoughts are tossing to and fro;
We change our posture o'er and o'er,
But cannot rest, nor cheat our woe.

Were it not better to lie still,
  Let Him strike home, and bless the rod,
Never so safe as when our will
  Yields, undiscern'd by all but God?
The wanderer seeks his native bow'r;
  And we will look and long for Thee;
And thank Thee for each trying hour.
  Wishing, not struggling, to be free."

CHAPTER V.

"I have meat to eat that ye know not of."—JOHN iv. 32.

I HAVE alluded to ANN's receiving the Holy Communion. One day my friend said to me, "To-morrow is the last Saturday in the month, and the day for giving to ANN the Sacrament. I administer it to her on Saturday evenings because on that night her sisters are sooner home from the mill, and are able to get themselves ready to receive it with her. Will you join us?" Of course I gladly consented, and thus became a partaker along with this saint-like creature in that most comforting, as it is most solemn, of all the services of the Church on earth. The room was full of holy influences, reminding me of the chancel of a church. By the bed-side was the little table, relieved of its books and flowers, and now covered with a damask cloth, with lights upon it, and the sacred vessels; and there was ANN, with her spotless kerchief around her head, and her pure and chastened countenance beaming, in the intervals of her swoons, with rapt and joyful expression. It reminded me strongly of Keble's lines:—

"I came again—the place was bright
With something of celestial light;
A simple altar by the bed
For high Communion meetly spread—
Chalice, and plate, and snowy vest.
* * * * *
She listens till her pale eyes glow
With joy wild health can never know,
And each calm feature, ere we read,
Speaks silently thy glorious creed."

Such was ANN COWMAN when I knew her. Few persons, I should say, ever exercised such a holy and purifying influence on those who came within their reach as did this most patient and extraordinary suffer[illegible] meek was she, so calm, so wholly resigned, so

her resignation, so conformed to the mind of Jesus in all her most severely prolonged sufferings, so ever expressing by look and gesture "it is good for me that I have been afflicted," that it was impossible to be near to her and not feel in one's inmost self the power of her piety, and confess the omnipotence of the grace of God. Who, moreover, could have expected to find, in one who had been in her best estate but a poor factory girl, such refined feeling, such singular delicacy of perception, such high intellectual development, such a perfect grace and gentleness of manner, as this poor sufferer so remarkably displayed, and which won her the esteem and admiration of all who came within her reach.

And then with all this there was such a great tenderness of heart, such deep gratitude to God, and under Him to every one who in the slightest degree ministered to her wants or her comfort, bodily and spiritual; such a cleaving affection to those whom she believed loved God, her own holy, heavenly Father, and who were serving the Lord Jesus, her only Saviour and her only hope, and were led by the blessed Spirit who had sanctified to her all her afflictions, and made her to rejoice on her bed, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory! She indeed realized the communion of saints; and never did I leave her for any considerable time but, on my bidding her farewell, she succeeded by some means to make me understand that, though absent in person, we were still one and united in Him our common Lord, and that remembering each other, and praying for each other at the throne of grace, there could be no real separation. Yes, I still see her, turning her animated face upward, the tears running fast down her cheeks, and the finger of her unparalysed hand pointing to heaven, as if appealing to Him for the fulfilment of His own gracious prayer—"That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; I in them and Thou in Me, *that they* may be made perfect in one.

CHAPTER VI.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."—REV. xxi. 4.

I SAW ANN last in August, 1848, which was three years after my first becoming acquainted with her. I was then passing through deep waters, and she was also. She had some time before lost her dear and kind pastor, who had for years ministered so faithfully to her wants, and this was a very heavy blow; and she had had, moreover, other trials to bear, more painful to her than what even her bodily ones were. My visit was but for a short time. I found her altered, more worn by suffering, and her life evidently hanging by the finest thread; yet still the same—the same chastened, upward, heavenward look, the same gushing, loving feeling towards those around her. We wept together, tears of mingled feeling both joy and sorrow; and then I prayed, and blessed her in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the most holy and ever-blessed Trinity. And so we parted, never on earth to meet again. The following passage in her favourite book expressed her last farewell to me:—

"HEB. xiii. 5.—I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

"When friend from friend is parting,
And in each speaking eye
The silent tear is starting,
To tell what words deny,
How could we bear the heavy load
Of such heart-agony,
Could we not cast it all, our God,
Our gracious God, on Thee?
Yet oft these hearts will whisper
That better 'twould betide
If we were near the friends we love,
And watching by their side.
But why be sad, since Thou wilt keep
Watch o'er them day by day?
Since Thou wilt soothe them when they weep,
And hear us when we pray?"

It was about six months after this that she became suddenly worse. Having no fire in her room, probably the cold of that season of the year was more than she

was able in her now utterly debilitated state to bear, and she gently but quickly passed away. He who in His perfect wisdom and in His fulness of love had given His creature this most long and remarkable course of suffering to endure, and who had also given to her (blessed be His name!) the abundance of His grace to bear it, and to be more than conqueror through Him who loved her, saw that the work was finished, the victory complete, the saint fully matured, the Christ-like character wholly hers, and the example she had set to others of unwavering submission, of unmurmuring endurance, of entire conformity to His blessed will, of rejoicing in tribulation, of perfect deliverance from earthly things, and of happiness in God alone, clearly displayed, and then He took her to Himself!

Ah! dear ANN COWMAN, how often, both when thou wert alive and since thy blessed release, when I have been vexed with the cares of the world and the disquietudes of daily life, and with other more heavy sorrows, and have been in danger of impatience and of murmuring, how often has the remembrance of thee in thy lonely room going through thy constant alternations of life and death—now sinking into thy fearful swoons, and then again struggling back convulsively into consciousness; and this night and day, with no intermission, for twelve long years—the intervals of thy pain ever filled with holy eucharistic offerings of praise and prayer, intercession for thy friends and for all mankind—ah! how often has the thought of thee, thou blessed saint, roused me up to a livelier sense of my mercies, and a deeper conviction of my duty! Never may thy blessed, hallowing remembrance pass away from my heart; never, never may the wonderful lesson of the all-sufficiency of the grace of God, taught so mightily through thee, lose its supporting power and influence over me, but, with the memory of other holy and blessed ones departed, may it ever stir me up to run with greater ardour and redoubled vigilance "the race that is set before me, enduring the cross, despising the shame."

"Ah! soothe us, haunt us night and day,
Ye gentle spirits far away,
With whom we shared the cup of grace,
Then parted—ye to Christ's embrace,
We to the lonesome world again;
Yet mindful of the unearthly strain,
Practised with you at Eden's door,
To be sung on, where angels soar,
With blended voices evermore!"

The earthly tabernacle of ANN COWMAN lies in the burial-ground of the new church where her affectionate pastor had ministered so assiduously. A simple tombstone was erected at the expense of some who had known her, and who felt deeply grateful to God for the privilege they had enjoyed. I append letters, which, while corroborating what has been said in the foregoing pages, will shew that this further memorial of the departed one is the result of the affectionate wishes of some of these friends to perpetuate the remembrance of her character, her sufferings, and her "Life hid with Christ in God."

———, *March 5th*, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR:

Pray accept my best thanks for your kind note. I do indeed feel truly grateful to you for your promise of endeavouring to comply with my request, for I cannot but be aware that I have asked you to take upon yourself a somewhat difficult task. Poor ANN's deprivation of speech prevented her holding much conversation with her friends, and consequently she affords but scanty materials for a Memoir. She used, however, to tell me that *you* understood her much better than most of her visitors. Would that I could assist you with any particulars; but I fear I could impart nothing that you have not already heard from Miss U——, for although I had the privilege of visiting her daily during a period of three years, I was seldom able to remain with her for more than half-an-hour, which time I generally devoted to reading. Her cheerfulness under such continued suffering often astonished me. Never did I hear her breathe a single complaint; on the contrary, she often assured me she had not one pain too much, and that she would not change places with any human being. Ardently as she longed to enter upon the joys of heaven, she never failed to express how perfectly willing she was to await God's appointed time for her removal. Still I could not but see how earnestly she desired the realisation of some of her *favourite* lines.

"Oh! soon may heaven unclose to me!
Oh! may I soon that glory see!
And my faint, weary spirit stand
Within that happy, happy land!"

Do you know *Thoughts of Peace?* It was one of the little books to which she was most partial; and if you have it, I can tell you nearly all her favourite passages, which I noted at the time I read them to her. Her greatest trial was in losing Mr. W——; but I think she in time became reconciled even to his loss. A few days before his departure, when she was weeping very bitterly, a friend begged her to read the lines—

"Weep not, though lonely and wild be thy path," &c.,

as being applicable to her. After reading them, she turned immediately to the passage beginning—

"I weep, but not rebellious tears," &c.

Both these passages are in the little book I mention.

You must have seen enough of poor ANN to have remarked her extreme susceptibility of kindness. Any little present or attention of any kind completely overpowered her. I do not know whether you are aware that soon after her death a subscription was raised for the erection of a tombstone, several of her friends being anxious to pay some tribute to the memory of one whom they loved and esteemed.

I cannot conclude without thanking you for the kind manner in which you have received my application. I assure you it cost me a great effort to venture to address you, but my affection for poor ANN overcame every other feeling. I will only add my earnest wishes that you may enjoy an increase of health,

And remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully and obliged,

ELIZA W——.

ANN COWMAN was born in 1808, and was forty when she died. She was always amiable at home, and regularly attended church and school, and was anxious her family should do the same. Mr. M——, the medical man, attended her without any charge. She was seventeen years ill, and twelve without the power of speech; and was never known to be impatient, and when others were so, would shake her head.

Her favourite books were:—*Thoughts of Peace, Thomas à Kempis, A Christian's Daily Preparation for Death and Eternity, Doctrine of the Cross*, &c., &c.

She was particularly fond of the Psalms. The way in which she often expressed her feelings (being speechless) was by pointing out passages in these books. She was always anxious about the welfare of her friends, and never forgot to ask after all, distinguishing the members of a large family by putting up a finger, according to the age of each, the first for the eldest, &c.

I cannot write any more. ANN COWMAN'S character can be better felt than described.

CATHERINE U——.

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 8.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE HARD REQUEST.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
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One Penny.

THE HARD REQUEST.

CHAPTER I.

"The snares of death compassed me."—PSALM CXVI. 3.

A MAN was standing at the door, evidently in great distress. He was about middle-age, tall, and strong-looking, dressed in the usual attire of a working man. "Will you be good enough to come and see a person who is dying?" "Yes, certainly." The man turned at once, as though in haste to direct me the way, and I followed.

The house to which I was conducted was situated in a narrow yard leading out of one of the most populous streets in the district under my charge. It was one of the ordinary dwellings of the humbler classes, having on the ground floor one room for living in, and above it one bed-room, in which all the family had to sleep. But I had no need to ascend the stairs, for lying on chairs, immediately before me as I entered the house, was the person for whom I was wanted. She was the man's wife, and had apparently been suddenly taken ill whilst engaged in her usual household employments, for, excepting that the fastenings around her neck were loosened and her cap removed, she was evidently in her ordinary dress. She was, however, very ill; the countenance was greatly discoloured (almost black), the face was turned downwards over the side of the chair, and the blood was dropping from her mouth into a basin on the floor.

My first inquiry was if a medical man had been sent for, and, to my surprise, the answer was in the negative.

The man gave some evasive answer. "Go," I said, "to Mr. ——, in —— Street, and ask him to come directly. He is the surgeon nearest at hand." The man heard what I said, but yet made no movement. "The woman is so ill, you must have a doctor." The man looked at me; his face was pale and showed suppressed anguish. "Sir," he said, "I cannot go for Mr. ——; we owe him a bill, and I don't think he would come."

I took out a piece of paper, wrote a few lines to the surgeon, asking him to come at once, and, giving it to the man, bade him go with it, adding I would be responsible for any charges there might be. The poor fellow did not now hesitate one moment; he eagerly took the note, and hurried off for the doctor.

During the interval I knelt down by the poor suffering woman; she was in great agony, convulsively endeavouring to respire and to clear her throat and mouth of the coagulating blood. I saw she could not speak, and so I prayed, three or four children in different parts of the room looking on with frightened and wondering looks.

Ere long the man returned and the surgeon with him. The latter, after a short examination and two or three brief inquiries, seemed fully to understand the case; remedies were ordered to be applied immediately to the chest and feet, and he hurried away to send medicines. I said to him, previous to his leaving, the husband standing by, "You will understand that I pay for all that is needed, Mr. ——."

I also then left, a neighbour woman having come in, and begun preparations for applying the mustard-poultices and the hot water.

CHAPTER II.

"I was in misery, and He helped me."—PSALM cxvi. 6.

WHEN I again visited the house, which was towards evening, the poor woman was wonderfully better; she was laid in bed, and seemed free from pain, though very feeble. She said little, but was evidently glad to see me, and willingly acquiesced when I again offered to pray. The husband, who appeared to be acting as head-nurse, knelt with me by the bed-side.

It was either at this visit or at the next one that I ascertained that the man was out of work, and had been so for some months. He was a cart-driver. The winter was one of great trial to the working classes; trade was very much depressed, and thousands were without employment. This family had suffered beyond the ordinary measure, for they were country people, who, about two years before, had been induced, by the hope of gaining more regular and profitable employment, to remove from their own village to our large town. Since the bad times had set in, in consequence of which the man had lost his work, a daughter had died, and they had been sore straitened to provide for her sickness and her burial. It was the bill for attendance upon this poor girl that was still owing, and which had kept the man from sending for the doctor to his wife. Altogether it was a most melancholy and touching story. The man, his wife, and six remaining children had been literally starving for weeks; their only resource being the slight pittance from some Charitable Visiting Society; or, when this was not to be had, the disposal of some one of their few articles of household furniture.

Doubtless it was from this long pressure of want and distress that the poor woman had broken down. The surgeon attributed the formidable attack of congestion of the heart, under which I had found her labouring, and which had nearly cost her life, altogether to anxiety, want of proper food, and consequent debility.

The extreme pressure of the time of trial was, however, now over. They no longer wanted food, and, though it was still a considerable period before trade revived and the man obtained regular employment, yet they were enabled through the aid given them to weather the storm, and even rather to improve in their circumstances than otherwise.

The children, with the exception of the eldest, who after a while obtained employment in a factory, and in the meantime stayed to help her mother in the house, were sent to school, clothing and school-fees being provided for them. The poor woman herself—now supplied with good nourishment and duly cared for by the medical man—was soon able to resume her occupations in the house, and presented a very different appearance to what she had done when first I saw her.

CHAPTER III.

"What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits He hath done unto me?"—PSALM cxvi. 12.

I OFTEN visited the house. I had taken a great liking to the poor people, and they, when their shyness wore off, which, from their former life in a remote country village they had more than an ordinary measure of, seemed to become quite at ease and to enjoy my calls.

They were remarkably clean people, and their house, though very poorly furnished, was always in such a state that one could comfortably sit down in it. James, the husband, was generally at home. Having no work to call him out, and not caring, as he said, to walk about the streets doing nothing, he usually spent his time reading any book he could lay hold of, or the Loan Tract left weekly for their perusal. I found him a plain but sensible man, with strong notions of what he conceived to be right and just, a great dislike to drink and low ways, and a very close attachment to his family and his home. He did not say much respecting their past sufferings, but it was evident, from the tremour of his voice and the tear which he had to brush away from his face when the subject was alluded to, and especially when the sickness and death of their daughter were mentioned, that the arrow had entered very deep into him.

On religious subjects, however, neither he or Sarah ever spoke. If I read the Bible, or spoke upon any passage I had read, they listened with attention and respect, or, if I proposed prayer, they always readily assented and knelt down in silence beside me, and took particular care that their children did the same; but they never offered any remark of a religious nature, or responded to any that I might make.

One afternoon, which I well remember, I had called, and was sat down by the well-scoured deal table under the window, at which James was reading and Sarah sewing. We talked awhile on various matters: about the children, who appeared to be doing well at school; of their mother's apparently restored health; on the

improving prospects of trade, and the probability of work becoming general. James at last said, somewhat abruptly, "Sir, I have been thinking a good deal about all you have done for us since I first fetched you to see her; and I feel as though I did not know how to thank you. You saved her life, and almost all of us too, and I would like to do something. As I have nought yet to do, I should be very pleased if there was any job I could do for you, for neither Sarah or I can ever thank you half enough."

I was affected by this, and by the way in which it was said. There was an earnestness and emotion in his manner, marked with that hesitation and shyness which accompanies persons of his class when they speak of anything that more than usually touches their feelings.

After a pause, I said, "I am much obliged, James, by your offer, but I really do not know that there is anything you could do for me in the way you speak of. But I have been thinking that there is one way in which you might show your gratitude, not to me, for I wish for nothing and deserve nothing, but to God, who has been your true friend and benefactor, to whom you owe more thanks than you can ever give, and who has vouchsafed to use me as His messenger to you. Now I have learnt that you have never been in the practice of attending a place of worship; your children go along with the other Sunday-scholars, but you never go. Why do you not?

James did not answer, but Sarah looked up from her sewing and said something about their clothes not being decent. This was only an excuse, as I

knew they had not done otherwise, even when they had better Sunday garments.

"Well," I resumed, "you asked me, James, what you could do to please me, and I am sure you meant to do something when you said so. Now, I answer, begin to go to Church—begin at once, and go regularly. I do not say, come to my Church; there are several others within easy reach, and there are plenty of free sittings in all; go to any one you like best. I shall be quite satisfied if your only go somewhere, and go constantly."

I had no response for a while. I saw Sarah taking a side look at her husband's face, but it was bent down, and there was nothing to be discerned. At last James said, evidently with an effort, "Well, Sir, we'll see." He got up and walked across the floor, and I, construing this as a sign that it was of no use to say any more on the subject, took my departure. Sarah hastened to open the door, and there was that in her over-readiness to attend to me which evidently expressed her fears lest I should be offended. But I bade them good day, in a tone which I trusted would remove her apprehensions.

CHAPTER IV.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord in the sight of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's House. Praise the Lord."—PSALM cxvi. 18.

ON the following Sunday, the Evening Service had begun, and I had turned to read the Absolution, when my eye fell upon two figures in the extreme corner of the Church, a place where casual attenders or strangers

usually located themselves. I should not have known Sarah, for her face was concealed by her bonnet; but James's large partly-bald head, bent down as it was, I at once recognised. I lifted up my heart to God specially for them.

From that day they came regularly. After awhile a small pew was awarded them, and, whoever else were absent, James and his wife were always there. They must have locked up their house in order to come, for the children sat in the gallery with the scholars, and their parents below, so that no one was left at home. I continued to call at the house as I had done before. Their attendance at Church was alluded to, but not much said by them: yet they evidently, upon the whole, had a satisfaction in coming, and that an increasing one. They were also much more willing to converse upon religious subjects, and not unfrequently of themselves referred to the sermons they had heard on the Sunday before, showing a deepening acquaintance with spiritual things.

And this divinely-awakened interest continued to increase. At their own request, within a year they were admitted as candidates for Confirmation, and attended the evening classes carried on for the instruction of those who were preparing for that holy ordinance. James was now in work, having again obtained the situation which he had held with his employer before the trade became so bad. Yet, however hard his day's work, he was always in his place in the school-room where the class was held, with his clean-washed face and his well-brushed coat, his whole expression being bright, hopeful, and happy.

The Sunday following the Confirmation, both James and his wife were at the Lord's Table; and seldom have I given the signs of the death of the Lamb of God, the tokens and conveyances of His grace to those who believe and trust in Him, with more heartfelt thankfulness, than when I gave them to that humble pair.

From this period James's character grew in religious seriousness and decision rapidly. He and his wife were greatly altered, but he the most. There was then an association of working men for the circulation of tracts, and the members gave up the afternoons of Sundays for the carrying out of this mode of doing good to their neighbours. James became one of this most useful band, and none was more interested in the work or more diligent and regular in its performance.

Above all, he showed a devoted attachment to the Lord's house and the public worship celebrated there. I can still see him, with his large octavo Prayer-Book, following in the Service with most edifying deportment, or listening to the sermon with eyes fixed and an unmovable attention, such as it does a preacher's heart good to behold.

One day I said to him, "James, who had you in your pew yesterday? Did I not see strangers?" "Yes, Sir," was the reply; "do you know, it was my brother and his wife from H——, the place we come from in the country. I have often wanted him to come and see us and to spend a Sunday, for then we could get them to Church; for do you know, Sir, where they come from people never think of going to a place of worship. *But* we got them, and well pleased we were; and so I *think* were they too. I only wish they could always

attend Church with us." "Why," I said, "James, it it is only about three or four years since you yourself went not to Church. Have you forgotten that day when I first begged you to attend the House of God?" "Ah, Sir, that was a good day for us—a day we shall have to thank God for as long as we live, and indeed I hope for all eternity; but it was a very hard day. Ah! Sir, you little knew what a hard thing you asked. I would almost have done anything else rather. In that street where we lived, there was not a soul ever went to a place of worship, nor had we any notion of going before you put it to us to do so, in the way you did. Why, Sir, when we first began to go to Church, we used to get out of the house one by one, so that none of the neighbours might notice us; and we didn't go the straight way to Church, but we went round about all sorts of ways for fear they should find us out, for we knew that, when they did, they would lead us a sore life. And so they did; we have been shouted after, had things thrown after us, told we were only going for what we could get—which was true enough in one sense, but not as they meant, poor creatures. Oh! Sir, I think if it had not been that we thought we could not deny you, who had done so much for us, we should never have had the heart to begin or carry it on. Oh! Sir, but we felt it a hard request."

"And what do you think of it all now?" I said.

"Why, Sir, I think neither Sarah or I would care if all the town were shouting us, or if they were to throw stones at us all the way to Church. Thank God, we have got beyond all that now; and if there's one place on earth that we prize, beyond all others, it is the House of God."

Would my readers like to know the further history of these poor worthy people? In 1849 the cholera broke out in that part of the town where they dwelt, and the street where James and his family lived was one of the earliest visited. This time it was Sarah who fetched me to attend James, who had come home from his work at breakfast-time, and almost immediately had begun to be ill. "Pray for me," he said, as I hung over him; "pray for me. I have a great pain at my heart; but the Lord helps me to bear it." I watched his countenance turn more and more livid as I called upon God by his side. He was soon gone.

Sarah was his only nurse, for the neighbours were stricken with terror and would not enter the house. I called about five o'clock to see her. She was lying on the stone floor; the disease had attacked her immediately after her husband expired. So the hearse-man, who came to fetch James's body, let it remain, and in the morning took them both. The starving time they had passed through some years before had doubtless so weakened their frames that they fell an easy prey.

"Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before Him." —Eccs. viii. 12.

"Clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."—Psalm xcvii. 2.

"Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." —Rev. xv. 3.

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 9.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE

OLD SHOEMAKER.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
LEEDS: W. BRIERLEY, 2, BOND STREET.

One Penny.

THE OLD SHOEMAKER.

CHAPTER I.

"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."—PSALM cxix. 103.

FEW sights were more calculated to impress the beholder than the appearance of that church and congregation, for the congregation was worthy of the magnificent church, and the church of that immense congregation!

Imagine the large area on the ground floor crowded to excess in every part, so that even the very steps of the chancel had to be used for seats, and galleries on both sides and at the west end also full to the uttermost;—such was the place into which we have to introduce our readers.

We said the church was worthy of such an assembly. Few structures could compare with it for effect, or for suitableness to its purpose. A nave and a chancel with three aisles, yet so constructed as to allow most of the worshippers to see from end to end; ranges of columns carrying the eye up to the east end, stained windows in double rows on either side casting their rich and mellowed light on the scene below, with one of the finest organs in England pealing forth its wondrous sounds of harmony.

The service has not yet commenced, for that church *in the evening* was always filled long before the time. *The music* resounding through the edifice is but the

voluntary; the officiating clergy will soon enter, along with the white-robed choir. Let us pause, and quietly ponder the scene before us.

How solemn a thing is Divine Worship: how dreadful, as Jacob termed it, is the house of God when its purpose is rightly considered: how subdued and awestruck should be the minds and hearts of those who are found there!

How many of the vast multitude now crowded into this church are thus attuned to the sublime and solemn purpose for which ostensibly they are here? How many are there who are duly prepared to join in the prescribed service of confession and prayer, of praise and intercession, which is just about to be commenced?

But see, who is that? Whatever be the case with others, here is no want of reverence and devotion, so far as can be judged from the outward deportment. A man seemingly between sixty and seventy has entered by the main door, and is slowly crossing the church, just where the seats of the clergy are placed, and where nearly all can observe him. Yet he is apparently wholly unconscious of observation. Dressed in black, with his clothes cut somewhat in the fashion of those of our grandfathers, he looks like some old clergyman, and all the more so because he wears the ministerial white cravat. He walks slowly, we said, and now we see that he is lame, and that the black stick he carries is a necessity. But look; as he reaches the centre of the nave he stops, makes a deep obeisance, and then again moves onward, passing behind the lectern and the pillar before which it stands, and is now for the while out of sight. His seat *is never pre-occupied*, and he is kneeling there in

the most abstracted devotion, undisturbed by the entrance of the procession of clergy and choristers, some of whom take their places immediately before him, and it is only as the officiating minister begins the sacred sentences that the head and shoulders of that remarkable old man appear. Well may we say "remarkable." What a peculiar face; how strong the lines, how almost stern the expression, how with every penitential sentence the whole countenance seems to harmonise and to give forth the manifestation of the deepest contrition! But the Psalms are being chanted, and you see the old man's lips going, so that, whether he understands music or not, he has no idea of being silent when the praises of God are set forth.

And now the devotional part of the service is gone through—gone through as in few churches it could be rendered; and the preacher is in the pulpit, just about to commence his discourse—a preacher worthy of that magnificent church, and worthy of that vast gathering of people. See,—the old man is emerging from his place behind the choristers, and is coming forward into the centre of the nave. Is he ill? He moves slowly, and as noiselessly as his lameness and his stick will allow; but no one offers to go to his help. What does the old man want? Ah! it is explained. He has seated himself on the base of the lectern, and with the eagle and its sacred burden over his head, he is so placed that his fixed eye commands the fullest view of the preacher, while his ear is evidently drinking in every word, and his countenance, before so unmovably stern, like a landscape over which the sunbeams and shadows *alternately* play, reflects every phase of the preacher's

discourse. Yes; that face is a picture, such as might be transferred to one of the stained windows around, only wanting the nimbus to be a Thomas convinced or a Peter forgiven.

CHAPTER II.

"I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts."—PSALM cxix. 63.

THOSE who have never penetrated the yards and alleys of a large town, and especially those in the older parts of a large town, can scarcely conceive how extensive some of them are, and how considerable a portion of the population they contain. Some of these yards are everything to be condemned, both as regards their sanitary condition and their moral character. Close, filthy, overcrowded, each generally a *cul de sac*, inhabited by loose people, tramps, and the bad of all sorts, they are a disgrace in these days to any large and wealthy community. But, however, all are not so, and here is one yard which is a marked exception; for though in the oldest quarter of the town, it is both clean and decent. That door on the left hand is the one we must enter; it is to be remembered by the gas-lamp being opposite, which sends the light full on the windows, so that the occupants have the advantage of a constantly-illuminated bedroom. Some one is going in before us; we follow, and enter. It is the ordinary dwelling of the working-class—the "house" below, the chamber above, the staircase just opposite the door. It is full of men, and we observe that the man who has just entered before us is kneeling

as trivial a cause as the first. But right was right with him, and if he thought he had justice on his side, or he was in the path of duty, I don't think the prison, or even the stake, would have made him swerve. At this time (1816) he was a member of the Methodist Society, and was married. He commenced business again on his own account, and by working generally until ten o'clock in the evening and rising at four in the morning, and making his apprentices do the same, he soon began to be in comfortable circumstances. In 1819 he had the misfortune to be run over as he was crossing the street, and was obliged to have his leg amputated. To remedy his loss so far as possible, he made himself a cork leg, which was so ingeniously executed that he was repeatedly asked to manufacture similar ones for others who had suffered like injuries; but from some religious scruples, which he would never fully state, these applications (with one exception—a coloured missionary who had lost one foot) were all refused, and he confined himself wholly to his own trade of a shoemaker, in which he was very expert, and as equally conscientious. He was the most strict, and at the same time the most affectionate, of fathers. After my mother was gone, he would not have a woman to clean for him for a considerable time, and I myself was consequently obliged to do the necessary cooking, cleaning, &c. And among the ups and downs of life, I don't know of anything that used to give me more pleasure than the thought that I had cleaned the house, cooked the dinner, and made a shoe in a day. These were happy days; and although I cannot look back upon the events of later years without a lively sense of thankfulness to God and

a deep feeling of gratitude for my present position, yet the implicit faith in the Bible which my father exercised, and which he early instilled into me was, I am convinced, more conducive to growth in grace and peace of mind than all the learning and all the philosophy in the world.

"But to return to my father. About this time (1829) St. ——'s Church was opened, and my father was one of its earliest frequenters. He always attended there twice a day, and for a considerable time went also to the Methodist chapel on the Sunday and the week-day evenings, there being then no evening service in that church. When Mr. C—— was minister at St.——'s, my father became acquainted with him through his visiting a sick neighbour, and this led to Mr. C——'s coming to see my father weekly during his twelve years' incumbency at St. ——'s. My father now left the Methodists entirely, and became a zealous Churchman. He had learnt to read and write a little at an adult school established by the Quakers, and was consequently able to read his Bible, which now became his constant study and delight. He understood it to mean exactly what it says, and when he read, 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world,' he never imagined for one moment that a Christian would think of trying to evade so plain a duty. He consequently visited and relieved all that were sick or in want, as far as he possibly could, and almost entirely supported one of his brothers, who was confined to his bed for several years, until his death. His literal understanding of Scripture sometimes led him to practise needle

austerities, such as abstaining from leavened bread, &c.; but he was always ready to yield these matters when the minister wished him, though he would not budge an inch for all my arguments, which yet he sometimes confessed he could not answer. But, however, these were trifles compared with the happiness resulting from considering the Bible as God's own word, spoken to each individual man.

"At this time (1832) he heard of St. ——'s church being open on Wednesday evenings, and he forthwith went there regularly, though we lived at this time at the other end of the town, and he was by no means able to walk very far without great pain from his leg. I don't think he ever missed, rain or snow, for several years; and he ceased going there only because he happened to hear the bell at the parish church one evening as he was coming away from St. ——'s, much disappointed because that church was closed for repairs. He was now delighted with the thought of being able to go seven days to church during the week, instead of on one day or on two days only, and after this constantly attended the church prayers every evening. He was in the constant habit of retiring to his chamber daily at the hours of eleven and three, besides getting up several times during the night for prayer. After having attended the evening prayers at church for about a year, he began to go in the mornings also, and when we went to live in ——'s yard, which was in the vicinity of the church, he was in the habit of attending three times a day. He always used to retire for private prayer before he went to church; and besides *family* prayer, morning and evening, he was in the

regular habit of rising at midnight, the cock-crowing (three o'clock), and morning (six o'clock), for prayer. His preparation for the Communion, which he received weekly, was commenced the evening before, and included the reading of a short tract on the subject, with meditation and prayer."

To the foregoing sketch, as given by his son, let us add that old Charles, once speaking to us of his early days, described in very forcible language the first religious impressions he could remember to have had. He was then under six years of age, and near his mother's house was a wood-yard and a saw-pit in it, and he said that into this saw-pit, when the men were gone to their meals, he used to scramble down, and spend his time in such simple childish prayers as he was capable of. He added, that he was on one occasion so fully occupied with his little devotions that he was still there when the workmen returned, and that they were no little startled on hearing a voice saying "Our Father," at the bottom of the pit. So much for the opening of his spiritual being. Let us take one of the features of the latter part of it. While at all seasons Charles was earnest, devotional, and unworldly to a remarkable degree, his entire surrender of his whole soul to religious meditation, solemn prayer, and the most severe fasting during Passion Week, and especially on Maunday Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Eve, was something very rare. During that period he did no work, for as he then eat scarcely anything he wanted little, and he spent his whole time either in seclusion, or at church, or in visiting the sick and dying. And it ought to be stated here, what does not appear in the memoir by his son, that,

for some years before his death, *the whole of all Wednesdays and Fridays* was devoted by him to works of piety and charity.

Yet an erroneous impression would be left on the minds of our readers, if they gathered from what has been said of this primitive old Christian, that there was any leaning on his part towards a system of doctrine and practice against which the Reformation—"the blessed Reformation" old Charles called it—was so necessary and so decided a protest. On the contrary, so thoroughly was his mind imbued with Scripture truth, that when a clergyman, formerly curate at the church where the old man attended, showed tendencies of an anti-Protestant character, he was one of the very first to observe the change, to warn in the most earnest terms the clergyman himself of the danger he was in, and to remind others that whatever was against the Bible must necessarily be both hurtful and untrue. It may be added, that the practice of bowing to the Lord's Table, which he had learnt from one of good Bishop Wilson's books, he afterwards discontinued upon finding that it was construed to imply a doctrine regarding the Sacrament which he in no respect entertained.

CHAPTER IV.

"Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according unto Thy Word."
—PSALM cxix. 65.

SUCH was this wonderful old man,—one in these latter days to look at, and subsequently to remember with surprise and admiration. His very appearance was an index to his character and life; so decided, so

grave, so reverential, so fearless of man, so full of awe towards God. And yet he could be cheerful. Never shall we forget a Sunday School excursion to Scarborough, of which old Charles—himself being a teacher—was one of the party. He had never seen the sea before, and as soon as he could get away from the crowded railway station, he hastened through the streets, and when we found him he was sitting on the Castle Cliff, not far from the edge, and with his hands outstretched, his hat off, and his white hair floating before the breeze, his whole face in ecstacy, he was shouting, or rather half-chanting, half-shouting—

They that go down to the sea in ships: and occupy their business in great waters;

These men see the works of the Lord: and His wonders in the deep.

For at His word the stormy wind ariseth: which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep: their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man: and are at their wit's end.

So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble: He delivereth them out of their distress.

For He maketh the storm to cease: so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad, because they are at rest: and so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

O that men would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness: and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men.

We will but describe another scene. It is a cemetery; a hearse and mourning-coaches come up, and the body is brought out. It must be some one of no common importance, for no fewer than six clergymen in their

robes walk before the corpse, besides the officiating minister, who is the head of all the clergy in the locality, and whom we recognise as the preacher in the great church described in the beginning of this narrative. The mourners come behind, and one of them is the Vicar of an important parish, who has graduated in honours at the University. Who is the dead one, thus carried with all honour and all reverence to the tomb? It is the Old Shoemaker; and that clergyman who follows next to the coffin, as principal mourner, is his only son!

"For them that honour Me, saith the Lord, I will honour."

Many years have passed over since the foregoing sketch was written. It has in the intervening period been often reprinted in a separate form, and has also appeared in different popular religious periodicals.

In looking back, I fail to recall any other one of that little body of working-men (men working both for the supply of their own temporal wants and for the spiritual wants of others), meeting at the Old Shoemaker's house, whose character was so striking, and whose piety was so uncommon, as were those of our host.

Yet the whole of the little association was well worthy of observation; and each member of it could have supplied some peculiar feature of his own entitled to record.

One of them is delineated in another of these little narratives, "The Snowdons;" and George was, as is attempted to be depicted there, a consistent and touching example of piety in humble life. Two others were

striking cases of the subduing and supporting influence of religion. They were a father and son—tall, stout men—the son between forty and fifty years of age, the father near seventy. They were wood-sawyers—a very hard and exhausting occupation—and worked together at the same pit. Both were regular attenders at the weekly meetings at Charles's house, and both, with the rest of the party, were tract-lenders. They lived with no female in the house, for both were widowers and their children were away. Contrary to what might have been expected, the father was the stronger man of the two, the reason for which being, probably, that he had lived more temperately than the other.

It was touching to see, when John became a sufferer from heart disease (doubtless resulting from his heavy employment pressing upon a weak frame), how the old man tended his son almost with the gentleness of a woman. But the disorder gained more and more hold. John had to give up the work, and after a while was confined to bed, his old father being his nurse, when not obliged to be away at the saw-pit.

One day the old man was at my door, his countenance full of distress. "John is very bad, Sir, and he would like you to come on and give him Communion."

I was soon by the sick man's bed, the weeping old father on the one side, and another son, who had been hastily sent for, kneeling at the foot. John was evidently very ill, but quite conscious, and very prayerful.

The service was said at the little table. The bread and wine had been received by those present excepting the sick one, and now I brought to him the tokens and pledges of salvation. Poor fellow! As I approache

he would try to raise himself, but the effort was so convulsive that the bed shook under him, and the father and brother immediately rose to render help. It was well they did so; for just as he had swallowed the wine, with eyes fixed upward, his countenance began to change—a livid hue spread slowly over—then a quivering of the lips—one long sigh—and it was a dead man's head that was laid back on the pillow!

The old man did not live long after his son. He died also of heart disease, and in his case quite suddenly. The younger son did not long survive, only that he had to suffer a long and wasting illness.

And so the whole of the little company at Old Charles's one by one passed away. I knew them all, and well remember the solemn and grateful feeling with which I left the grave of the one last interred.

Who can tell what may have been, and what yet may be, the results of the quiet, consistent piety of those sixteen working-men, most of them advanced in years, and yet willing to give their time, labour, and means, so far as they had means to spare, for the kingdom of God's sake—their own lives thus supporting their Christian profession, and giving examples so greatly needed amongst our working-men, and also, let it be said, so highly appreciated by them.

It ought, perhaps, to be stated that, from the families of this little group of working-men, no fewer than eleven duly qualified schoolmasters and four laborious clergymen were added to the working staff of the Church.

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 10.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

THE

FIDDLE'S BEST TUNE,

THE HOUSE ON FIRE,

AND

THE WHITE HAT.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
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THE

FIDDLE'S BEST TUNE.

"What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—
MATTHEW xvi. 26.

WE had been sitting together during a somewhat long evening, and during our conversation my friend had several times referred to his father.

"I remember your father," I said; "but it was only in the later years of his life, and should not be sorry to have a fuller knowledge of his career, as, from what I have heard from others, as well as from what has incidentally fallen from yourself, it must have been a somewhat peculiar one."

"You shall have it now," rejoined my friend; "it is good for me to recall it, and cannot but be interesting and useful to others to know." My friend at once began, and so far as I remember, the following is the narrative he gave me, with two or three paragraphs of my own at the end.

"My father was brought up a cloth-maker, at W——, where he was born. He was a lively young fellow, fond of company, and always welcome; for, among other qualifications which made him agreeable, was that of being able to play on the fiddle. Music in those days was not so common as it is now; and when it was found it was generally in a public-house, accompanying a dance. Music is found in public-houses now, more commonly indeed than it was

then, and neither then nor now has it ever in public-houses done much good to any—to the players themselves or to the hearers. My father, however, saw no harm in it, and was never more in his element than when, the work of the day being over, he could exchange the throwing of the shuttle at his loom for the handling of his fiddle.

"I am speaking of more than sixty years ago, and things were very different then to what they are now. Many parts of the country were almost in a state of heathenism, and real vital religion was scarcely known. My father was one of those who were strangers to its power, as might be supposed from his love of company and his passion for fiddle-playing.

"It happened about that time that a famous preacher came into the neighbourhood, and was to preach, among other places, at the next village to the one where my father's family resided. So attractive was the preacher (and deservedly so, for he was a true man of God) that numbers went to hear him who had never been known to care for religion, and for which many who went, indeed, did not wish to care. My father formed one of these Everybody was going—he would go; it was a spree in its way, and none the worse for being a Sunday spree. He went; but he found what he did not expect—he received what he had not sought after. The preacher's solemn words sunk down into his heart, and he felt as he had never done before, a miserable, self-condemned sinner before God. He came home, and was resolved to be a different man. He would go regularly to a place of worship; he would read his Bible; he would pray.

"He was sincere in all this, and his good resolutions and altered conduct continued for a while—but only for a while. I know not how long elapsed, but not very long, before he was missing from his place on Sunday, his Bible was untouched, and prayers omitted. He was again what he had been before!

"And so it went on for a year or two; and it might have gone on to the end of the chapter, and the end been as sad a one as such God-forgetting lives usually come to, had it not happened that the same preacher was again to preach at the same place where my father had heard him before.

"I have said 'it happened;' but there is no 'happening,' if we mean it is all chance. In my father's case it was clearly the hand of a gracious God that ordered all. He heard of the preacher's coming, and was strangely affected. He felt something of the old impression revive at the name of the faithful evangelist, and yet he was ashamed to go and hear him again, after the failure of all his former resolutions and purposes of amendment of life. But the grace of God was strongly at work; and sure enough, when the time came, as much out of sight as possible, my father was in a corner of the crowded building, listening again, with a throbbing heart and with breathless interest, to the well-remembered accents.

"Solemn indeed were the words which fell upon his ears, and they pierced his very soul. He almost choked with emotion, and when the service was over, he got out with the rest of the crowd, and, hastening as quickly as possible, made his way to his home, which was about *two miles* distant. All the way he felt as in a dream—

a very unhappy dream. Conscience was thoroughly awakened, and striking heavy blows on his heart. His former sins, which he had once thought forgiven, now rushed back, along with the sins of his subsequent ungodly state; and, to make the pressure still more insupportable, came the crushing thought of his awful backsliding, his broken vows, his dishonoured religious profession, his setting at naught the mercy and offered love of God!

"He could not go home. The house was in sight; there was his comfortable bedroom; and his mother would have his supper ready. But no, not home,—his misery could bear no witnesses and no solace.

"Had any one been passing down that lane, and listening attentively, sounds might have been heard, such as would have excited attention and alarm. Sobs—earnest ejaculations—broken cries of despair—proceeded from the corner of a field farthest off the road. My father, like Jacob, was wrestling with his own heart—alternately praying and then sinking into despondency. He had begun before, and he had fallen; what chance was there for his doing better? And if he did not, then he was a lost man. The preacher's words rung through his soul—'he had better never have been born.'

"And he felt it was true; his inner self told him it was all true, true as God was true! What could he do? What was there which had hitherto hindered him, and which would be his hindrance again, if he were to seek to live to God? In a moment it flashed on his mind like an electric shock; the discovery was complete, the remedy was disclosed,—but it was a

sharp one! He knelt again on the cold ground; he cried for mercy; he offered himself as a poor, wretched, lost sinner to God in Christ; he pleaded the blood; he asked for grace and help; and then he rose. The stars looked out brightly as he raised his eyes heavenwards, and seemed to tell of the wisdom, and the goodness, and the power of God—and these for him!

"He hastened homewards, his heart still beating, and even beating quicker as he drew nearer to his home. Why? They are all in bed. It is long past midnight; and, as they have often had to do before when he was out at his merry-makings, they have left the door unfastened for him to enter. Still his heart beats, and he can scarcely draw his breath, as he gently raises the latch and enters the quiet dwelling. What is he doing? He is cautiously breaking up the smouldering fire. And now he has gone and brought something from its peg on the wall, something which he can find in the dark, so readily his accustomed hand goes to the well-known place. And there, on his knees before the fire, he is taking his fiddle to pieces; and as one portion after another gives way to his quiet yet fixed grasp, it goes into the fire, which now sends its bright blaze over the whole of the kitchen, falling full on the face of the kneeling figure! Surely other eyes watched that scene; other beings, unseen, beheld that sacrifice; and more ecstatic sounds than earthly music ever produced rang in the heavenly choirs over that entire surrender of the soul to God!"

"For years after this a plain covered cart, such as *clothiers* take their cloth to market in, went regularly

down to the adjacent town, and on its return there was seated in it a thoughtful, grave man, who usually spent the time on the journey in earnest prayer. That covered cart was one of my father's chapels. Another was his own kitchen, where, night by night, were gathered earnest and religious men and women, gladly welcomed for the word of God and prayer, whose stirring hymn-singing told the passer-by that their hearts were in their strains, and that they were not ashamed

> 'To tell to all around
> What a dear Saviour they had found.' "

And more years passed by, and then in another suburb of that large town might occasionally be seen a plain family carriage, taking its inmates to divine worship from a large, handsome house on the hill. If you asked who was the owner of that house and carriage, you would have been told that he was a wealthy, very wealthy, manufacturer; that he was now in the decline of life; that he had been for a long course of years one of the most consistent, yet one of the most unassuming of Christians; that his bounty was something princely, while his manners continued most simple; and that he enjoyed, as he well deserved, the highest respect of all who knew him.

If, however, you had asked him of himself, you would have been told—for he had no false pride or false shame to prevent him—that he was a sinner saved by the marvellous grace of God, and that he owed everything that he had to his having been led, when a young man, to *burn his fiddle!*

"Thus saith the Lord God: Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols."—EZEKIEL xiv. 4.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and examine my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." —PSALM cxxxix. 23, 24.

THE HOUSE ON FIRE.

"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise Me."—PSALM l. 15.

IF the reader of this has read the narrative entitled "The Fiddle's Best Tune," he will remember that the remarkable career of the person whose life is there sketched closed in a large, handsome mansion, in the neighbourhood of the town where he had acquired his very considerable fortune, and, what was far better, the well-deserved reputation of being one of the most consistent and most bountiful of Christians.

It is to that mansion I would take my readers, and describe to them what occurred there on the occasion of a visit of some days which I spent in it, now a good many years ago.

The first owner of the place, to whom reference has been made, had been dead for some time. He had gone to his rest with the respect of all who knew him; and the house was now occupied by his only son, who was married, and had a family of young children.

It was the middle of winter, and the weather was exceedingly severe, and so we continued to sit gladly by the large fire, which glowed somewhat intensely in the grate of the comfortable dining-room, until the hour for family devotion, and this over, all retired to rest.

Towards daybreak I was aroused by a voice calling me, and abruptly bidding me arise—*that the house was on fire!*

The truth of this startling announcement was at once obvious by the rush of smoke into the room through the door which the servant in his fright and haste had left open. Quickly putting on some clothes, I passed out of the bedroom into what, as I looked down from the landing-place of the stairs, seemed only a dense volume of choking smoke, and which for the moment drove me back, despairing of either being able to see my way down or to avoid being suffocated. A second attempt, however, was more successful, for, covering my face as much as possible with a handkerchief, I managed to grope my way to the bottom. There I found lights glimmering through the dense smoke, which allowed me to form some idea of the confused and exciting scene. The whole establishment, suddenly aroused from their sleep by the alarming intelligence, had already rushed down; and master and servants, men and women, all alike were carrying water to throw on the flames. The fire was in the library, a large and handsome room, which had its massive carved mahogany book-cases all around. These on one side, just at the back of the dining-room grate, where the fire (partly owing, no doubt, to the sharp frost) had burnt so keenly the night before, were a mass of flame.

I joined the busy, excited workers, having p viously ascertained that the large bell outside of house had been loudly rung to arouse the people in neighbourhood.

We worked on, our feet slipping on the wet mar pavement of the hall over which we had to carry buckets of water; but the fire showed no signs decreasing, and no assistance of any kind arrived.

At last, notwithstanding all our efforts, the flan had so gained on the book-shelves that it became i possible to approach the door of the library to thr water on the burning material. Involuntarily all s pended their efforts, which were indeed plainly usel and looked with dismay on the increasing flames.

It was then that the master of the house, who l himself worked harder than anyone else, said: "(efforts are vain, and no assistance comes; let us n call upon God;" and he leading the way, we follov him to the laundry, where the lady and her three lit boys had been taken—the latter brought from nursery, *immediately over the blazing apartment,* now laid, wrapped in a blanket, at their mother's fee

There we knelt down—still hearing the crackl of the flames, and breathing the smoky atmosph from the burning wood and the books—and prayer offered. He, in whose hands are all events, and wh the elements obey, was humbly asked that, if He it would be for good, the house might still be spa from the devouring fire; but that, whatever was issue, it might still be for good, for His glory, and the true spiritual benefit of all concerned.

All was then silent, and we still remained kneeli *The first* to rise was the butler, and I followed

to the burning room. Wonderful! The fire, which when we left was like Nebuchadnezzar's burning furnace, was sunk so low as not to be higher than the marble mantel-piece! We eagerly called, and were as eagerly joined by the rest; the efforts were at once renewed, and just before the engines arrived the last flickering of flame was drenched out!

It was a Sunday morning never to be forgotten.

The damage done was estimated at a thousand pounds; the valuable books, and the costly mahogany shelving, were all a black smoking mass, lying ever so deep on the floor of the once handsome library.

But out of that mass of charred wood, and books more or less burnt through, came out one volume, in its plain, dark morocco binding, *wholly uninjured*, saving that the gilding of the leaves was a little tarnished with smoke. It was the Bible my friend had used at the family devotion the evening before; *it was his father's Bible—the one which had been regularly used by him who burnt his fiddle to save his soul!*

Reader, that very Bible is before me as I write this. It contains an inscription recording the fire; and it is still daily used for the worship of Almighty God—the God who has promised to hear and to answer prayer—the unchangeable God. Reader, dost thou pray? Dost thou daily study the word of God? For we are to be sanctified ourselves, and all things are to be sanctified to us, by the word of God and by prayer! Blessed be God!

THE WHITE HAT.

"The voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook."—PSALM lxxvii. 18.

IT must be quite thirty years now since the narratives of "The Fiddle's Best Tune" and "The House on Fire" were written. Like others in this series, they were written in the first instance solely for my own congregation, and generally on days when weak health prevented any outdoor occupation. But though not intended for a more general publicity, in time they received it, and were reprinted again and again, though not usually by myself. One of these narratives thus reprinted had the fortune, or misfortune, to receive a not very favourable notice from a reviewer. It was "The House on Fire," and my critic found occasion for much incredulity, not to say scoffing, in the account of the remarkable preservation of the family Bible. This would not now be worth referring to, but for two reasons. One of these reasons is that I am willing to own that the narrative might have suggested, as one explanation of the escape of the particular book from the general destruction of the library, that the Bible, having been used at family prayers the evening before, would most probably be left on the table in the centre of the room, and so, when the heavy mass of shelves and burnt books fell forward, the table and book would both be buried in the fallen mass. Certain it is, *the Bible was dug out of the debris the day after in the state described.*

The other reason why I refer to the review in question is that now, when the narrative is appearing again, I am led to append the account of another remarkable event in the history of the family with which both the narratives are connected, and which further account may again tax the faith or credulity of some one or more of my readers. However, I know it to be true, and, as it supports the lessons to be drawn from the previous narratives, it may without impropriety now appear along with them. I say the new additional narrative may *now* appear, for it could not have done so when the others were written.

For my friend, who is the narrator of "The Fiddle's Best Tune," and who appears again as the pious owner of "The House on Fire," was not always entitled to the latter character. In early life he, like his father at that age, was a stranger to the powerful influence of the grace of God. When quite young—sent into a foreign land, thrown among strangers in a large and very worldly city, with considerable means at his command—any influences for good from the home life became largely dissipated, and he was living at the time now to be mentioned, as he himself would have been the first afterwards to allow, "without God in the world."

Yet he was in possession at this time of many great blessings. He had returned to his country, and was settled in his own comfortable home, some half a dozen miles or more from where his father lived. He was married to one whose goodness and gentle piety promised and ensured everything, so far as she was concerned, of household peace and comfort, and already one or two children had come to make the family joy *the more* complete.

But all this had the one great want; the heart was not given to God, the life was not an honouring of Him. The father's soul must have been troubled, and his prayers fervent and continuous, for the true welfare, the true happiness, of his only son, whose life was so different to his own. And those prayers were to be answered, and answered in a wonderful manner—so wonderful as for ever thereafter to be a theme for that son's daily thanksgiving and ever-increasing gratitude.

I have said my friend at the time in question lived out of the town, at a villa some six or seven miles away. He drove a phaeton, drawn by a pair of handsome, spirited ponies.

It was a sultry summer's afternoon, when he and his wife, and the groom seated behind, set out to return home from a visit to town. The sky was lowering, but they had reached about three miles on the way before rain began to fall, and the louder peals of thunder warned them that the storm was about to break.

Half an hour would be sufficient to reach the home, and so the ponies were stirred up to a greater speed, when, just as the whip touched the spirited beasts, there came a flash of lightning so intensely bright that the ponies with the carriage and its occupants seemed to be all alike enveloped in the blinding flame, and a crash of thunder burst in tremendous force just over their heads, making the very ground to reverberate beneath.

The effect on the ponies was something like maddening—they started off at their fullest speed, all efforts to check them only serving to increase the raging force with which they tore along.

Frightful was the danger! My friend and the groom shouted at their utmost strength to warn any vehicles to keep out of the way; and together they again and again sought to hold back the terrified animals—but all in vain.

Fortunately, rather say providentially, the storm, with its awful blaze and deafening thunder, had burst on them just as the road, which hitherto had been partly level and partly descent, began to rise, and continued to rise nearly the whole of the rest of the way, part of it being a sharp and trying ascent. And now at last the ponies began to moderate their speed, signs of exhaustion shewed themselves, so that when the carriage reached the longed-for home, the poor beasts passed quietly through the gateway, and stood, bathed in sweat and foam, panting at the door.

"It was an awful time," my friend said as he told me the thrilling story. "When we got out of the carriage we felt stunned at the thought of the danger to which we had been exposed; and we made our way upstairs to change our drenched clothes, feeling more dead than alive. I had thrown my hat down in the hall. When I came downstairs, I stooped to take it up. It was a white silk hat, such as were then worn by gentlemen, and had a wide brim. *On the left side of the brim was now a round hole, as though it had been perforated by a sharp tool, about the size of a marble; the hole was black round the edges, and had a burnt look and smell.*

"Just then the groom brought into the hall some parcels from the carriage, and said, 'If you please, will you come and look at the carriage?' I went

the man pointed out to my astonished gaze *a round hole in the floor of the carriage, just between where my wife and I had sat, about the size of a marble, and appearing as though it had been burnt!*

"How imminent a danger, how marvellous an escape! Well might the poor animals in their maddened fear rush on in their frantic course. *The lightning had struck the carriage, passing between my wife and myself, and, piercing the brim of my hat, had gone through the floor of the carriage, leaving us all unhurt!*"

My dear and honoured friend has now been dead many years. His life had been long that of a most pious and consistent Christian, a bountiful supporter of religious and charitable efforts, an upright magistrate, a generous and hospitable friend, walking in the steps of his godly father, and seeking "to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

Yet ever there hung in a conspicuous place in his dressing-room, where I have often seen it, *a white silk hat, with wide brim, in which, on one side, was a round hole the size of a marble, and having a brown burnt-looking edge!*

"My song shall be of mercy and judgment; unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing."

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 11.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

"PUT BY;"

AND THE

UNEXPECTED DIFFICULTY.

BY

REV. CANON JACKSON,

ST. JAMES'S, LEEDS.

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
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One Penny.

"PUT BY."

"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow."—PSALM cxvi. 3.

HOW well satisfied a man generally is when he can say, "I have put something by this year:" meaning, of course, that he has saved some money.

Now it is not wrong to be careful and to save. On the contrary, it is a duty too often neglected, especially by men who have wives and children. Not only tradespeople ought to be prudent and careful in their affairs, so that they may be able to provide for their families, or to meet losses in their business which all are liable to, but working-people ought also to try and save something to "put by." Were this more attended to, there would not be so many families suffering from want in a time of bad trade. A shilling or two a week "put by" while there was plenty of work and good wages, would make most working-people independent during a whole winter of want of employment.

At the same time, there are those to whom this desire to "put by" becomes a snare and a great evil. Let me show this by a case which lately came under my notice, and which I shall never forget.

A lady called on me one day, and said, "I wish, sir, you would go and visit a man who is near his end in the Infirmary. Mortification has begun, and there is no time to be lost." I went at once. The ward was

No. 13; and, looking round upon the sufferers as they lay on their weary beds, my eye at once fixed upon one in the right-hand corner as the one I wanted. I was right. A young man, with a deathly hue, was there; an aged female was bending over him with looks of great concern. His leg, resting in a cradle on the bed, told what was the injury and the danger.

But the countenance at once riveted my attention. We speak of the upper classes of society having aristocratic or noble features, but I never saw duke or lord with a more perfect face than that which lay there before me. The lofty brow, with raven-black hair over it—the nose—the mouth—above all, the eyes—would have made a study for a painter who wanted to pourtray some great and good character in history of whom no picture was to be found.

As I approached the bed, he looked with an anxious expression. I said I had been asked to visit him, and should be thankful if I could be of any service. Speaking in a very feeble tone, he replied he was in distress about his soul; he had not thought much about religion; he had been thinking about other things; he was not prepared to die.

I spoke of the atoning work of the Lamb of God; of the entire and perfect pardon obtained by His death for sinners; of the free and full salvation there was for all who would come unto God by Him, the Mediator, our Brother and our Lord; of the Spirit's work in the soul, giving the penitent the assurance of forgiveness and acceptance, by which we cry, "Abba, Father;" and of the same blessed Spirit's sanctifying operations, by which we are made fit to live and fit to die.

"Oh, sir, that is just what I want. Can I have pardon, and become a new man?" The quivering of the pale lips, the intense, earnest gaze of those lustrous dark eyes, looking all the more bright because of the ashy colour of the rest of the countenance, went to my heart, and showed me at once that the Holy One was at hand and at work; that the arms of the Good Shepherd were already under the wounded sheep, and that the bleating for help had entered into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth. I prayed—he wept.

"Come again—come again soon," he whispered, with a look which showed that the oil and wine had been poured in. Glory, glory be to God; glory, glory to the loving and dear Saviour; glory, glory be to the blessed Spirit, who, if He convinces of sin, is ever ready to console, to give the true life, to take of the things of Jesus, and show them in saving power to the poor penitent! Glory, glory, glory to the Triune God for ever!

"For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him."—ISAIAH lvii. 17, 18.

I MADE enquiries about him. William was about thirty, and had a wife and several children, all of them, of course, young. He had a good situation in connection with a coal-pit, and also (which showed his careful habits) kept a small shop, which was managed by his wife while he was at his work. "He was," said my informant, who felt deeply interested in the case, "of all men I knew the one who seemed most determined *to get on*. He was always thinking how he

could *put by;* he was careful, and saving, and watching at all ends; and was just one of those whom you could see would in time acquire property by mere dint of saving—*of putting by.* Indeed, it was all he thought about, I believe." added the gentleman. "William never went to a place of worship; he was sober, careful, and very industrious, and that was his religion—he wanted no other."

And so this was the end of all his care for this world and neglect of the other—of all this constant determination and endeavour to *put by!* He was now indeed "put by"—in that mournful Infirmary ward, on that bed of pain, which was soon to be a bed of death. It was a clear case of being "put by!" Yet it was better he should be thus "put by" than go on spending life and all his thoughts, all his soul's energies, in seeking to "put by" the perishable things of earth and time; to go on deluding himself with the idea that such was the true end of his existence, for which all other considerations, even those of his soul's eternal state, of God, of Christ, of heaven, of hell, might be neglected and set at naught.

And now God, in great mercy, to bring him to repentance and salvation, before he was too far gone in covetousness, "which is idolatry," and which we know from Holy Scripture will certainly shut a man out of the kingdom of heaven, had laid His hand upon William. In perfect health only a week before, he was at his employment as usual, superintending some coals being drawn up, when, as he was trying to keep the rope or chain straight, his foot was caught and terribly wrenched. He was taken to the Infirmary, and "put by" in the corner, where I saw him.

In a short time it was evident to the skilful surgeons who attended the poor sufferer that if there was to be any chance of his life being saved, the foot must be taken off. And so poor William was "put by" for a while into the operation room, a place which makes me

shudder every time I pass the door, and think of what has to go on there; and from the operation room he came back to the bed in the corner—"put by" with part of his poor injured leg gone.

But it did not answer. Gangrene, or something of the kind, came on; the kind, watchful doctors knew all about it, and saw there was no longer any possibility of his life being saved; and William had all hope of that kind now to "put by."

Ah, it is one thing to talk of death when we are well, and when death is not apparently near to us, and it is quite another thing to have to look death close in the face—to *feel* the ghastly messenger at our side! So William had now to know and feel.

"Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."—PSALM xxxii. 7.

WHAT a sweet visit to the poor sufferer was my next one! Such a change, such peace, such calm joy! I read out of St. John the words of the Lord, "Let not your heart be troubled," &c., giving a simple explanation where needed, and applying them to his case; and it was like manna to his awakened soul. And then I prayed, as I had done on my former visit (this time his wife was at the bedside), and I think I can still see his noble face, the eyes filled with tears, the lips moving, while, with hands clasped, he whispered, "Jesus, Jesus, I am Thine; keep me Thine for ever!"

When I rose from my knees, he looked at me with a wistful gaze, and said, "You are not going yet?" So I sat down and repeated verses of hymns, to which he listened with rapt attention. "Say those last again," he whispered, and so I did; and then he said, "Again, if you please; I should like to learn them by heart." And then he repeated after me, and after that, with a little *help, said* by himself:—

Jesus, let Thy name be ringing
In my closing ears at death;
Let me to Thy cross be clinging
When I draw my parting breath.

Then with guardian angels winging
Up above the stars my way,
Ever soaring, ever singing,
In the realms of endless day.

I went again the following day, along with a Christian friend. William was very ill—in collapse. His teeth chattered, his whole frame seemed convulsed, while the big drops stood on his forehead. He seemed very near to the end; he could not bear to speak, but he motioned that I must pray. I did this, scarcely expecting to see him again, and, taking a long look at him, came away.

But, contrary to my expectation, as well as of the nurse, who took a great and tender interest in the poor fellow, on the next day William was not only living, but better; quite himself again. We conversed a good deal. Among other things he said, "I cannot sleep, so I am always praying, and I have been praying for all the poor people in the place, that they may all know and love Jesus as I do. O blessed, dear Jesus, Thou didst die for me; how much hast Thou loved me! Thou wilt never leave me nor forsake me. I shall be with Thee, dear Jesus, for ever."

Ah! who would not be at peace with God, and have this sweet care and love for everyone, and be able to trust in Jesus, and to experience the fulness of His deep, unutterable love, which makes the soul rejoice even on a dying bed!

This visit was on the Tuesday; on the Wednesday he was much the same. I had a dear young man, who loves the Lord Jesus, with me, and he was astonished at the sweetness and heavenliness of William's deportment, and at the intense feeling he displayed at the *name of Jesus*. It was indeed something never to be *forgotten*.

There could be no doubt that William's sins and iniquities, with all doubts and fears as to his acceptance through the blood of the Lamb, were now "put by."

"My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."—PSALM lxxiii. 26.

I WAS going out of town on the following day, and I asked my friend to stop the carriage at the Infirmary, that I might see William. It was well I did. It was my last visit. Now it was clear he was dying. Again we had the whispers about Jesus, and again those most expressive eyes gleamed at the all-holy, all-saving Name. Again he said he was quite happy, for Jesus was with him; and again the hands, now becoming cold in death, were feebly brought together as I knelt and prayed. Again the solemn benediction was pronounced :—

"Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit thee;
"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;
"The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee;
"The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace,
"Now and for evermore. *Amen.*"

That evening he fell asleep in Jesus.

On the Sunday following, the poor, maimed body, in which for a season had thus wondrously and powerfully dwelt the Holy Spirit of God, was in its narrow cell—"put by" to rest there for a little while, until the voice of the archangel and the trump of God shall call the dead from their graves to meet the Lord in the air, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to Himself."

AND now let me address myself to thee, whosoever *thou art,* whose eyes are at present on this page.

In the name of God, what art *thou* seeking to "p by?" Art thou giving thy heart to the things of t world, and is it all thy study to get on, and to be at to say thou art worth so much, that thou hast sav this or that, that thou hast so many houses or so mu money in the bank; and knowest thou not that "t world passeth away," and that thou art passing aw also? If thou art spending thy mind, thy strengt thy time, only for these ends, art thou not like a m building a house on the ice—putting all his earnin and savings into that house—and all the while t thaw is beginning, and both thy house, and thy goo and thyself, are going soon to be drifted right awa Alas, alas! what madness is this! What saith t Scriptures to thee? Hear the words of the wisdo of God:—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures up earth, where the moth and rust doth corrupt, and whe thieves break through and steal: but lay up for you selves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor ru doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break throu nor steal."

PUT BY FOR ETERNITY! Thine alms, thy praye thy tears, thy hopes, thy affections, thy pity for the po and wretched,—above all, thy soul,—let all be "put b within the veil; lay all down before the mercy-se with the wings of the cherubim overshadowing th and thine; there all shall be safe, and safe for ev They shall be found after many days! Thy "life sh be hid with Christ in God"—"put by" with all E saints in glory everlasting!

Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.

THE
UNEXPECTED DIFFICULTY.

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."—LUKE xii. 21.

MR. M—— was a merchant, who had carried on business in a large town for upwards of thirty years. He was unmarried, kept a very small establishment, having only one aged female servant, and maintaining his household expenses within the very smallest limits. He was equally careful of his money in other ways; whatever was the object for which you applied to him, whether it was to relieve the poor, or to aid some school, or promote religious efforts, the answer was almost invariably the same—he had nothing to spare; and you gained nothing by your solicitation.

His business, which was also carried on with the greatest economy, was all he seemed really to care for, and to this he was devoted, never being absent during the hours when his warehouse was open.

Perhaps I ought to add, that there was one other subject which occupied his mind, but it was only to a very slight extent, when compared with his devotion to business—to get and save money. This other subject was politics; but, as might be expected, his sympathies were all with what was narrow, illiberal, and unjust. Yet he was respected in a certain way, as all men are who are supposed to be making money, and who, to use the world's language, "know how to keep it." And again, what was really surprising, Mr. M—— came regularly to the house of God. Whoever was absent, he was not. Look when you would at that part of the

gallery where his seat was he was sure to be occupying it. Of course, his religion stopped with his outward attendance, and went no further than sitting or standing in his pew. To attend the Lord's Table, to speak on religious subjects, or even to kneel when prayer was offered, were all as foreign to his religion as if they belonged to the practices of the Hindoos or the paganism of the South Sea Islands. His religion, indeed (if it is not profane thus to use the word), was only part of his worldly life and a sort of adjunct to his politics; anything beyond that, anything to affect the soul and change the life, he neither knew nor wished to know. Such was Mr. M——, such the man whom one day I was unexpectedly requested to visit. He was said to be unwell, but only slightly ailing, and, therefore, I was the less prepared for the summons. I went, wondering.

I was admitted into the house by the old servant, who said her master was in his room, but sitting up, and that I might go to him. He was reading the newspaper, which, as I entered he laid down on the bed, and received me with great civility, though not without some slight embarrassment. He said he had got a troublesome toe, which, after giving him pain for a considerable time, had at last laid him up; or, rather, that the surgeon he had consulted contrary to his will had insisted on his being laid up, and so for ten days past he had kept his room. He added that he was sorry I had been troubled to come to him, but that an old friend of his had so begged that I might be sent for, he had consented in order to meet his importunity. He hoped, however, soon to be out, and at his warehouse again as usual.

Of all cases to which a minister, in the discharge of his serious and responsible office, has to attend, perhaps none are so trying and difficult as those of which Mr. M—— was one. After a long experience of such instances, however, I have found that the best way is open the Word of God as soon as possible, read a

portion in the spirit of inward prayer, and, in the same entire dependence on the blessed Spirit's aid, go on to speak with reference to the passage, pointing out its meaning, and, so far as the temper and disposition of the patient will allow, applying the teaching to his own particular case; and then, as soon as this is done, to kneel down and offer prayer, making mention of his special needs. So I did on the present occasion, and then, after asking to be allowed to come again, took my departure. And much the same was the history of several other visits which followed. Mr. M—— looked no worse, and seldom complained of his foot; but he did complain of his medical men (for he had now a physician as well as the surgeon) keeping him so long confined. He allowed me to read and pray, but if I endeavoured to lead the ordinary conversation, which he was willing to carry on, into a more serious channel, and with a special religious application to himself, it was evidently anything but palatable. I might read and explain, but he would make no reply to any direct appeal. The truth was, he was expecting soon to go back to the world and to business, and I was only tolerated as a matter of decency and civility.

But the old housekeeper said one day, as I was leaving, that the doctors had left word that they should be glad to see me, if I could arrange to pay my next visit about the time of theirs. I accordingly did so, and waited for them in the room below, while they saw their patient upstairs. After some time they came down and joined me, and the physician stated that Mr. M——'s case had become hopeless, that the disorder was gangrene, and that the time had come when he ought to be made aware of the gravity of his condition, and that, knowing I was in attendance, they judged it best that the painful announcement should be made by me.

They took their leave, and I mounted the stairs. What an office to discharge! I have often had to do it, and always felt as I suppose a judge does in passing

capital sentence on a criminal; but I never felt the task more difficult and painful than on this occasion. What made it worse was that Mr. M—— had no notion of the real character of his disorder—whether because the medical men felt the peculiar unpreparedness of their patient for the disclosure, or that they had deemed it on physical grounds right to abstain from expressing their growing conviction of his danger, clear it was that he was wholly ignorant of it. He received me quite cheerfully, began to speak on some matter of news which he had seen in the paper, and I had some difficulty in bringing him to let me read as usual. After the reading, instead of the usual comment, I turned to the subject of his disorder, and expressed my serious concern in respect of it. He replied, saying he hoped soon to be all right, and, when I again spoke gravely, he only met it with another decided expression as to his speedy recovery.

It was then, after inward prayer, that I said I was sorry to have to give him my very decided opposite conviction—that I feared not only that his disorder was most serious, but that it was to be fatal.

Never can that next moment fade from my memory. The unhappy man started up from his recumbent position, as though a bullet had passed through his body, and, with a countenance of the most intense surprise and horror, exclaimed, "Good God! what do you say? you don't mean I am going to die?" His frightful emotion almost took away from me the power of utterance, but at last I was able to say that what I only expressed was true, and that, in fact, I was but delivering the opinion, the positive opinion, of the medical men who had just left, and that I was doing it at their request. The face, which had been ashy white, now turned almost purple; he stared at me with an eye wild with terror, then the muscles of the face gradually relaxed, and with an expression of anguish not to be described he burst like a child into tears and convulsive sobbing. I knelt down and prayed, but he

little heeded; he wept incessantly. "Oh," said he, as I rose up, "what must I do? what must I do? I have never thought of dying! Are you sure; is it not a mistake? Can't the doctors do aught for me? won't they try?"

I endeavoured to soothe him; spoke of the common lot, of the better world, of the mercy of God, the redemption in Christ Jesus, and the all-sufficient efficacy of His blood; and I was hoping that at last he was going to receive these important truths into his heart, when he suddenly broke out, as though the thought just struck him, "What is to become of what I have saved? what must I do? I've lived for it; it was all I cared for. I have been getting it and saving it all my life, and now what is to become of it? *I don't know what to do with it! Oh, Mr.—— what must I do with my money?*"

Yes, reader, this foolish, miserable man had saved ten thousand pounds, and now he would have been happier if he had not possessed as many farthings. He had not a single relative that he really cared for in the world; he had refused to help the poor and the needy; he had been deaf to the appeals of religion; he had lived for money, and for money only—and this was the end!

"Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

"Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped up treasure together for the last days."—JAMES v. 1, 2, 3.

Within about a week after this the housekeeper, going into his room at seven in the morning (he would not have a regular nurse, or allow any one to sit up with him), found him cold and dead. He had passed away with no one nigh to soothe his parting spirit or to close his eyes.

I had visited him in the meanwhile. He was more attentive; but his will-making and the disposal of his money were sorely in the way; and it was difficult to keep his mind close to religious subjects; all the more so because the insidious character of his disorder partly blinded him as to the imminence of his danger. It was one of those cases which a minister has to leave with God—on which he can say nothing.

But I felt, as I read the Burial Service at his funeral, that the words which occur in the opening Psalm might have been written purposely for the poor man whose dead body we were about to lay in its last cold bed. They thrilled through me as I pronounced them :—

"MAN WALKETH IN A VAIN SHADOW, AND DISQUIETETH HIMSELF IN VAIN; HE HEAPETH UP RICHES, AND CANNOT TELL WHO SHALL GATHER THEM."—*Psalm* xxxix. 7.

W. Brierley, Printer, 2, Bond Street, Leeds.

No. 12.

A

PASTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS.

Rebecca Dennis and Mary Purdy.

BY

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REBECCA DENNIS AND MARY PURDY.

CHAPTER I.

"The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."—ACTS xxviii. 27.

I WAS finishing my visiting of the sick wards at the workhouse one day, when, just as I was leaving the house, the master said, "I believe the surgeon left a message for you, sir," and, looking over some papers on his table, he took up a slip and put it into my hand: "Mr. T——, the house-surgeon, begs to direct the attention of the chaplain to the case of Rebecca Dennis, in the —— ward." I said, "The —— ward; I don't know such an one." "No, sir; I dare say not," said the master, "for it is devoted exclusively to females of bad character. It is in a remote part of the house, which you would never even pass in your ordinary visitations, and we have rarely called the notice of persons who come for religious purposes to the house to it, unless some one there requested to be visited." I had some further conversation with the master—a most worthy and intelligent person—from which it appeared that the class of persons who usually were received into that ward were of a most unpromising character, merely seeking a temporary asylum till they were able to return again to their old vicious courses, and to frequent their former haunts. Of course, from this the reader will have learnt that I had not long been chaplain of the place.

Having expressed my readiness to go to see the person referred to, the master summoned an attendant, and directed her to conduct me to the —— ward, and introduce me to the woman. Following my guide,

I ascended the stairs, and, passing by all the bed-rooms I had before seen, I stopped before a door, which was unlocked, and I entered the room. It was next the roof, and only lighted from it. Around were about half-a-dozen beds, and seated by a fire two or three females, whose appearance at once bespoke their character. They rose as I entered, but it was not to one of them that I was sent, for, turning into the corner of the room, Maria, my conductor, pointed to a bed, and said, "That is Dennis, sir."

I was soon seated beside her, and, whilst entering into conversation upon her health, had opportunity for observing her. She was apparently about thirty, and had a somewhat strongly-marked countenance. The features were regular, and, indeed, almost perfect, but all on a large scale. The eyes were blue, the complexion fair, the nose aquiline, the mouth firm, the forehead high, the hair auburn. She was rather thin, but there was no great alteration of colour from that of health. To the general questions I put—touching the length of time she had been in the house, whether she was comfortable, &c.—she answered me promptly, with no want of respect, but evidently not wishing to speak more than was necessary. I then tried to lead the conversation to different ground, and referred to the causes which had brought her where she was. I spoke of the awful nature of sin—its punishment in this world, but its more severe retribution in the world to come. I went on at some length, but to all I said she only replied, and that only when I asked her direct questions, "Yes" or "No," as the case might be.

Before I left I offered to pray with her, which she did not decline, and then I came away.

Of course I was discouraged, and could scarcely reconcile my reception with the fact of her having sent for me; but I determined to try again. Accordingly, in a day or two, I was again by her bed-side; and this time, having no occasion for preliminary conversation, I

at once recommenced the subject where I had left off at my previous visit. I endeavoured in every way I could to arouse her mind to the true knowledge of her state. I spoke of sin again in its general character, and then particularly of her sin—that which had reduced her to her present condition. I brought before her God's statements respecting human guilt, His awful punishment of it in many instances recorded in the Bible, the sentence of death passed upon all men because of it, the fearful judgment which is to follow, the horrors awaiting the unrepentant. I talked and pressed the subject in all the bearings I could think of as likely to make an impression on her, until I myself was excited to tears, begging her to look to herself before it was too late; and again I knelt and prayed for her.

When I rose up and looked at her, she was lying calm, and apparently utterly unconcerned, as though I had not spoken to her at all, and the women at the fire were laughing at us both!

I came away astonished. I had seen many unawakened people on their sick beds, and had often had great difficulty to fix their attention, or to give them any idea of what I wished to convey to them—nay, had before now known what it was to be repulsed with rudeness—but here was nothing of that kind. The woman had evidently a strong and intelligent mind. By her answers she showed that she fully understood my remarks and appeals to her. She was perfectly civil and respectful; but anything so calmly obdurate, so quietly, yet so resolutely, unyielding, I have never seen. She might have been stone-deaf for any effect all my words and earnestness produced.

Once more again, however, I went. Once more I sat by her, talked to her, reasoned, argued, preached the terrors of the Lord, and dwelt upon the merciful promises of the Gospel for the recovery of *sinners*; the wondrous love of the Lord Jesus in *'ving* for our salvation; again was excited; again *peal*ed to her in the most earnest terms, beseeching

her for her soul's sake to attend. I looked at her. There she was, with the same calm, unaltered brow; not a muscle of her face disturbed, not the slightest expression of concern! I could bear it no more. "Dennis," I said, "let me put it to you, and answer me honestly. Do you not feel anything of what I say to you? If you do not, tell me, and let me not go on uselessly any more." She turned her half-averted face at once to me, and, with a voice in which great decision and respect were mingled, said, "Sir, *I do not feel!* You are right; it is of no use your speaking to me. I am much obliged by the trouble you have given yourself, but I did not wish it." "But did you not send for me?" I said. "No, sir; the surgeon said he would ask you to come, but I did not want it." "Very well," I said, "I am glad you have spoken out so candidly. It is of no use that I should any more either excite myself or annoy you, when you have no desire for my speaking to you in this way. I will, therefore, now leave you. Only remember that should you change your mind, and wish to see me again, you have only to send me a message and I will come at once. And now let us part good friends. I wished to do you good. May God be merciful to you, and bless you, for Christ's sake!" As I thus spoke her eyes glistened, and her countenance showed emotion for the first time. She, however, only thanked me, and returned my "Good morning" with evidently a relieved air.

"Oh, sir, but she is *very hard!*" said my attendant, Maria, a serious and well-disposed young woman, as she turned the key in the lock of the door, upon our coming out. "Yes," said I, "she is indeed. I never saw one more so."

And so my mission appeared to end.

CHAPTER II.

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."—ISAIAH lv. 9.

REBECCA DENNIS appeared to me, from what I had seen of her, so utterly unapproachable, that I felt that it was in vain to attempt anything further in the way of direct effort on her behalf. I could only, therefore, seek her good by praying for her, hoping the time yet would come before her death for God's good Spirit to soften and change her heart. But this I did not look for soon. Her illness had not increased during my visits; on the contrary, it had rather abated, and, so long as this was the case, there seemed to be no prospect of a change of mind.

I was, therefore, not a little surprised to receive, within a few days of my last interview with her, a message that I was wanted in the —— ward again. I went immediately, wondering, as I mounted the stairs, what could have happened to effect so speedy and so unlikely a change. I entered the room, and was going to the corner where Dennis lay, when a voice accosted me, "It is I who want you, sir, not Dennis." I turned, and found it proceeded from a bed in the opposite corner to Rebecca Dennis's, between which and the place where I had usually been when addressing her, the women sat who surrounded the fire. I went up to the bed side, and looked at the speaker. She was younger than Dennis, had a prepossessing countenance, with very little, or indeed any, of the usual appearance belonging to the class who were brought to that room. But I had little time for this kind of observation, for the woman began at once to address me in a hurried, excited manner. "Sir, I want to speak to you very much. I have been waiting to speak to you for some me; I am so very miserable!" Here she burst into nvulsive flood of tears, and was for a considerable unable to go on. As soon as she was any way

calm, so that I could address her, I said, "Pray, what has made you miserable? What are you unhappy about?" "Oh, sir, I have been unhappy ever since I heard you first begin to talk to Dennis there. I heard all you said, and every word you spoke to her came right home to me; it was just exactly for me. Oh, sir, what must I do? I am so miserable. I have been getting more and more miserable every time I have heard you. I have been so wicked—I am such a sinner! What will become of me! What will become of me!" And again she was sobbing so that the bed shook under her. My work was very plain. After some questions to elicit what she knew on the subject of Divine truth generally, I preached to her Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and showed her the fountain opened by Him and in Him for sin and all uncleanness. She listened with earnest and fixed attention. I had sometimes to explain things over to her, for she was not of very active perception. But it was straightforward work upon the whole, and when I knelt down to pray it was with a satisfied feeling that her heart was offering up a penitent's sacrifice with me. "Oh, do come soon again!" she said as I rose to go, and, as I looked back at the door, I saw her eyes, brimful of tears, following me out.

"How strange is this!" said I to myself as I came away; "What a lesson as to the ways of God!" I could not tell why I had been sent to that room. The surgeon's motive was doubtless good, and yet it seemed that he had been quite mistaken in supposing that the woman to whom he had called me was in a state to profit by religious instruction. I had gone and gone again, and done what I could, and prayed, and all apparently in vain; and I had at last left off the hopeless, fruitless task, as I deemed it, with a sickening feeling that I was left to labour unassisted and in the dark. And now how plain it all appeared! Not one word I had said had fallen to the ground. The determined indifference of Dennis, and the wicked levity of the other women

which had tried me so much at the time and had roused me to speak so earnestly and excitedly, were all overruled to the bringing about the conviction and conversion of the other poor woman, of whom I knew nothing.

"Forgive me, O Lord, my momentary want of faith in Thee, and enable me, I beseech Thee, ever hereafter to follow implicitly the guidance of Thy Providential orderings, whether I am able to see Thy designs or not." Such was my prayer on the conclusion of this my first interview with MARY PURDY.

CHAPTER III.

"Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."—St. LUKE vii. 47.

ACCORDING to the poor girl's desire I did go to see her, frequently and regularly, and her progress was very satisfactory. Her mind became calm and hopeful; the past was most fearful and loathsome to her, but she had faith to believe that the promise would in her case be fulfilled, that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" for that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

She appeared to be wholly regardless of the opinions and conduct of the wicked and scoffing crew around her, and as little influenced by the coldness and indifference of Dennis, who, though always civil to me, never altered from her former distant and reserved demeanour.

I was glad to see this in Mary, and yet was not sorry to find that after a week or two she was removed from this uncongenial scene and companionship. Her disorder had assumed the character of a gradually-increasing weakness or decline, and it was judged expedient to remove her to the workhouse infirmary, which was situated on the other side of the premises. There I had more suitable opportunities of seeing and conversing with her, and it was on these occasions

I learnt from her the following particulars of her life :—

She was born and brought up in ——gate, in this town, and in her youth attended the Sunday School belonging to St. —— Church. There, through her regular attendance and diligent endeavours to improve by the instruction given her, she gained the notice and esteem of those over her, and was advanced step by step until she was at length placed in the first class. Of her privileges then, and the great kindness she experienced from the lady who had charge of the class, she spoke in most grateful terms, and only seemed to remember it all to draw the contrast between this period and her after-life in more strongly condemnatory terms.

But this early training, much as it had been departed from afterwards, now became of great and blessed use to her. Texts of Scripture, collects, and hymns, which she had learnt in her school-days, now, whilst I was conversing with her, came back to her mind, and both assisted her in laying hold of what I brought before her and of fixing it more strongly upon her memory. All her early associations revived, and her sick-bed life seemed to be but a continuation of her class at the Sunday School. The work she had to do deepened, indeed, in interest, and was made much more solemn in character by the fearful gap that had occurred between the two periods and by the evidently approaching close of all.

It was during this time, when Mary had perhaps been in her new lodging-room about three or four weeks and was becoming rapidly weaker, that I met Miss S——, her old and much-loved teacher. She no longer lived in the town, but had come over for a few days on a visit to a friend, at whose house I saw her. I communicated to her the intelligence respecting Mary, and received from her a full corroboration of all Mary's statements respecting her Sunday School career. She expressed a strong wish to see the poor girl, which I was as anxious should be gratified, and accordingly the *next morning* we together visited the workhou

Thinking it better, in Mary's weak state, that she should not have the interview without some preparation, I went into the room first, leaving my companion in the doorway. Mary was lying, reading a book I had left with her, a book I have found very useful for persons in her condition—"Daily Preparation for Death and Eternity." There was no one in the room with her, and she appeared calm and thoughtful. She gladly returned my greeting, and said she was much the same, that the night had been trying, but she was now comfortable. After a little more I said, "Mary, Miss S——, your old teacher, you know, does not live in ——— now, but I hear she comes over sometimes. Would you like to see her?" "Oh, yes, yes!" she eagerly replied; but almost immediately added, with a changed expression of tone and countenance, "No, I think I could not bear to see her. I am not fit she should see me." I said, "But I cannot think but what she would be glad, nevertheless, to see you, Mary." Here I was interrupted by a scream from the poor girl. During our conversation my companion had advanced into the room, and stood between me and the door, looking at Mary, who, turning her head at my last words, caught a glance of the well-known face, and, immediately covering her face with the bed-clothes, gave way to the most heart-breaking emotion. The interview, however, became a more calm and happy one, and before we left, when we had prayed together, Mary's face was again full of beaming confidence and affection towards her early guide and instructor—much the same as it was in former days, when she sat on the bench at the Sunday School by her side.

CHAPTER IV.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."—GALATIANS v. 22, 23.

MARY'S health had, as I have already said, begun more rapidly to decline. She seldom or ever alluded to it; but the wasting of her face and hands could not be mistaken. She had kept her bed from the time of my first visiting her. I had several times conversed with her on the subject of the Holy Communion, and had succeeded in giving her more definite views than what her Sunday School education had left upon her mind. She was anxious to receive it, and, thinking that now the time was come, I said to her on one of my visits, "Mary, I should wish you to receive the Sacrament soon. You have been now long thinking about it."

"I should be very glad, sir, if you think I am fit for it."

"I hope you are. We have prayed that you may be fully prepared."

"Yes, sir, and I have prayed often to myself alone."

"You are convinced how wicked you have been?"

"Oh, yes, sir; that I have been long."

"And you have sought earnestly for pardon?"

"Oh, that I did night and day for a long time, from the first of your speaking to Dennis."

"And you believe with all your heart in the Lord Jesus Christ; that He died to save us from the just punishment of our sin? You put all your trust in Him, and look only for mercy through Him?"

"Yes, sir; I have no other hope."

"And you would not now sin again, knowingly, on any account?"

"Oh, no; not for a thousand worlds!"

"And knowing that you must die soon, in the prime of your life, you are willing to submit to it, and to whatever sufferings and trials God may be pleased to bring upon you?"

"Yes, sir, quite willing to submit; nothing can be so trying and severe as I deserve."

"Well, then, Mary, as to-day is Thursday, I think we will say Saturday shall be the day, God willing, when the Sacrament shall be administered to you."

"Not to-morrow, sir, you think?"

"No, Mary, I cannot arrange for to-morrow; and, besides, it will be better you should have to-morrow for special reading, and meditation and prayer before you receive the Communion."

"Very well, sir. At what hour will you come?"

"I think eleven; that is the usual hour for administering the Sacrament to the sick here."

She seemed thoughtful for a minute or two, with her eyes closed, and then said in an undertone, "Could you not come earlier—by nine o'clock?"

"No; for the other women could not be got up into the room by that time. It would be very inconvenient for the nurses, moreover."

"Oh, yes, I had forgot that; but I wish it could be sooner than eleven. I think they might be ready by ten."

"Well, then, Mary, we will say ten o'clock; and I will speak to the nurse to be good enough to have all ready."

And so it was settled. I prayed with her and came away.

Saturday came; and at ten another clergyman and myself, with several of the aged women who were in the habit of receiving the Lord's Supper, were assembled in Mary's room. She was perfectly calm and motionless, and received the blessed elements with little perceptible emotion. The service was concluded, and we were still kneeling in silence, when she suddenly turned her head and asked for a drink of water. I rose, and perceived the expression of her countenance changed, and said, "*Are you worse?*" "Yes, sir, very much; but *very, very thankful.*" I called the nurse, and with the others left the room.

In about an hour I was at the workhouse again, thinking to see her for a few minutes, and to pray with her; but as I passed through the first room I was addressed by one of the women, "She is gone, sir; Mary Purdy is dead, sir!"

Yes,—she was gone; and the hour's delay in the administration of the Sacrament, which she was so unwilling should take place, would have just put it beyond her reach for ever!

"Oh, sir," said the woman who had nursed her, "Mary was a changed person altogether! She used to be very high tempered, and very troublesome before this last sickness; and now I think she has been, since she came to us this time, one of the quietest and best we have ever had. Do you know, sir, that we find her back is all black and sore? She must have suffered dreadfully from it for a long while, and yet she never told us! *Oh, sir, she was a very changed woman!*"

"God be thanked," said I, "may He change us all in the same way!"

CHAPTER V.

"Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed, I will return."—GENESIS xviii. 14.

I HAD not omitted all this while to inquire from time to time how Dennis was going on, and learnt that, to the surprise of the medical man, she was apparently recovering. At last she was able to leave the room, and several times, when I was passing through the workhouse-yard, I saw her sitting on a stool, enjoying the air and the sunshine. She was always civil, and indeed I may say, more than that, pleased to see me; and I never saw her but I stopped a minute or two to ask after her health. She generally inquired after Mary Purdy, but only as respected her bodily health, for it seemed understood that our conversation was now to exclude all reference to religious subjects. I had not noticed that she had been absent

from the yard for some little while, when, a few weeks after Mary Purdy's death, I received a message through Maria that Dennis wished to see me. "She is very bad again, sir," said the girl, "and will not be long, I think, this time."

I must confess I felt a little excited by this intelligence. Now it was to be seen what was to be the ending of her former determined rejection of religion, and whether her dogged indifference would stand the terrors of a death-bed. Her sending for me seemed to argue that it would not. Once more I mounted the stairs, and stooped to pass under the low door which my attendant unlocked, and was again by the well-known bed-side. But how changed was the aspect of things! There she lay—no longer the calm, unmovable Dennis I had known before, indifferent to my approach and careless to my mission, and only wishing for my departure. She was evidently labouring under strong emotion now; her countenance was haggard, and her eyes red with weeping, and the hasty rousing up the moment I entered the room, showed how anxiously she was looking forward to my visit. Before I could speak to her she beckoned to Maria, and asked her to desire the other women to withdraw from that end of the room, for that she wished to be unheard by them when speaking to me. This done, she turned with great energy, and, addressing me, said, "Now, sir, speak to me once more—speak to me as you did before, when I would not hear. I have been very anxious to see you. Now, sir, tell me what I must do to be saved." I felt so astonished at all this that I scarcely knew how to proceed, and could only say, "But, Dennis, how is this? What has wrought this change in you, and why are you now so anxious to hear about those things which before you set so entirely at nought?" "Oh, sir," she said in a quick tone, "I will tell you afterwards. But show me now what I must do. I am a horrible sinner, and I shall soon die, and I want to be saved, and I cannot go anywhere but to hell as I am now."

So I sat down by her, and I spoke of our creation by God to serve and love Him and to be like Him; of man's fall and our sinful nature, and of the means provided for our recovery; and of our baptism and early knowledge of religion, and of all the other ways in which God seeks to do us good. I pointed out how, in despite of this, men sin and offend Him more and more, and bring guilt and death upon themselves; how He sends troubles and sicknesses to awaken us from our state of sin and wickedness, and to make us look to Him before it is too late; how His Spirit works upon our hearts, and makes us feel distressed and to hate sin, and how this is a sign to us that God still seeks our salvation, and that He is willing yet to receive us and forgive us; how the Lord Jesus Christ pleads His sufferings and death on our behalf, and that for His sake God blots out the sins of true penitents, and gives grace to help them to live a new life—a life of purity and holiness; and how if they, by the aid of His grace, continue faithful in their service to Him, unworthy and undeserving as they are, He brings them at last to eternal life. Something like this was the gospel I preached to my now awakened hearer, and never was a preacher of it listened to with more earnest, rapt attention than I was, whilst thus speaking to Dennis. She needed no explanation; her powerful mind was now fully aroused, and most anxious to learn all that I had to bring before her. She grasped each truth as I declared it, and seemed to enter at once into the fulness of the statement and apply it to her own case. When I paused, she said, "Please to pray with me, sir." And so I did, and, oh, how earnestly and emphatically she responded to the petitions addressed to the throne of grace on her behalf! On rising from my knees, she requested me to come again as soon as I could, and then she would tell me, she said, "all about herself."

At my next interview, accordingly, I had her account of her past life, as well as of what had led to her recent change of feeling and conduct. "I come," she said, "from

——, in Kent, where my father still lives. I lost my mother when I was only six years old, and was, in consequence, a good deal neglected. I went, however, to the Sunday School for some time, and there learnt all the good I ever did learn, and then I went to service. What I think most led me wrong was neglecting the Sabbath-day. I used when at home to go always to Church and School, but I began now to make it a day of pleasuring, so much as I had opportunity. My going out on Sunday afternoons and evenings in this way brought me acquainted with other young people, and I formed connections in no way likely to do me good.

"When this had gone on for a while, some soldiers came into quarters in the town where I was, and I became intimate with one of them. When the regiment was ordered away, I followed him. He had promised to marry me, and I hoped he would, though he continued to put me off with excuses; and so I followed wherever the troops were ordered, living with him, and helping to support myself by washing for the other men, besides doing all I could for him. But here, in this town, I fell ill, and when the troops left I could not travel. I hoped to have been able to do so, and when you came before, and spoke to me so often, I was thinking of him and of my going after him; and so, sir, *had you spoken until doomsday you would have done no good as my mind then was, for I was determined to seek him again.* But he was not worth my thinking of him. I had letters written to him, begging him to send me word about himself, and some little money to help me to join him at Manchester, where he was, but he never took any notice of them. This was before I came into the workhouse, when I was very badly off; and, to keep myself from starving, I was at last obliged, poorly as I was, to make myself still worse, and to become what, bad as I was before, I had hoped I never should be." Here she stopped a while, and then proceeded. "But this only made matters worse and worse, and at last I was obliged to be brought in here, where it would have been well if

I had come at first. The doctor said I was very ill, and that I had, besides other complaints, a heart disease. I don't know what he means by a heart disease, but sure enough my heart was bad enough; it was breaking at the thought of being here; for I still had the one thing on my mind—to get again to the man for whom I had given up so much. But I never heard from him, and I became more and more sick at heart. And so it was with me, when one night, after I had been out in the yard in the afternoon for air, I felt much more poorly than I had done, and could not sleep; and so I began to think over the whole matter—how I had been deceived, how I had lost myself by my folly, and how the man was not worth all I had given up and done for him. Then I thought of you, and all the trouble you had taken over me; and I thought also of poor Mary Purdy, how changed she was, and how happy she had died; for I had heard the women all speaking about it, and I began to wish I was like her. And then, sir, when I began to feel more and more strongly how much I wished I was changed like Mary, it struck me that it was no use my wishing in this way, or my thinking about religion at all, *unless I was willing to give up the man.* Oh! sir, it made my heart ache when I got to this, but I could not put it away, and at last I determined I *would give him up.* But it was hard work. I prayed, and cried all night until the sweat rolled off me, and all about me was soaked with it. But, thank God, I won; before morning I had got the better of Satan! and now, sir,—*if I knew the man was in the next room, and I could go to him, I would not stir one step towards him.* One thing only will I seek and set my heart on—I want to be changed like Mary Purdy, and I wish to die and not to live. Oh, sir, come and see me often. I fully understand what you say to me, and I will promise to think it over when you are away; and I will pray—indeed, I can do nothing else but pray; it is the only thing I seem to be able to turn to. And another thing, sir, I wish you to do for me—

to write to my father, and tell him where I am and that I am likely to die. He is too old and too poor to come, but I should like him to know about me, and that I am in a better mind."

Of course, I promised as she wished, and both came to see her often and wrote to her father.

CHAPTER VI.

"As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."—ISAIAH lv. 10, 11.

DENNIS sunk very rapidly. Like Mary, she was taken to the infirmary to be better attended to, and there I had more opportunities of ministering to her, and had the blessed satisfaction of perceiving that her growth in Divine things seemed fully to keep pace with the rapidity of her bodily decay. She received the Holy Communion several times, and always with peculiar fervour and deep thankfulness. Her piety was of a very earnest, animated character, presenting thus the reverse of her former unimpressive apathetic deportment. Her self-abasement was extreme, and her condemnation of herself unmitigated; but with this there was no hesitation in applying to herself the promises of God's mercy to sinners. She believed herself in heart to have turned from sin, and, therefore, believed also that God would be inclined towards her in mercy and forgiveness. She looked to the Lord Jesus Christ and held fast by His cross, and that without wavering, to the end.

I think I never saw any one who had so fully conquered the fear of death; perhaps it might be said she never would have been so susceptible of it as many persons, for that she was naturally of a brave mind. This might be so, but still the perfect calmness with which she faced the last foe seemed to me to be based,

not on animal courage, but upon her steadfast hope in God's mercy, through Christ.

I saw her approach death, for she was several days sinking in it; and I was with her in the last hour of her conflict with it, for she sent for me when she felt it had come, and there was no shrinking even to the last. She passed away in peace. "Write to my father again, sir, if you please, and tell him I am gone, and that he has no need to grieve over me; tell him how kind they all were to me here, and that I had everything I could wish for; and tell him, sir, to seek God earnestly himself, that we may meet again. And, sir, there is one thing more; will you add to all you have done for me one thing more—will you say the burial service over me yourself?" These were among her last words to me. I need not say that I complied with her request.

I remember her funeral well; the gloomy November afternoon, with the heavy town fog hanging over the churchyard and its tens of thousands of dead!—the body carried by the joiner's men in their working clothes, the two workhouse women who followed for "decency's sake," and myself, and poor Mr. P——, the sexton, himself since dead and gone! The scene was an exact counterpart of Mary Purdy's burial.

I had now done with them both, and felt, as I tnrned away this time, that it was a great and solemn thing to be a minister of God, that souls are very precious in His eyes, and that His compassions are boundless!

Several years after the events just narrated took place, I was visiting an aged female in the same workhouse; she was infirm and nearly blind, and in some degree anxious about the state of her soul. As I stood by her bed, and urged her to make religion her great concern, and to turn everything out of her heart but the one thought of seeking God's pardon and grace, she exclaimed, "I know that, sir. I *know it; that* has long been on my mind; it is

no use thinking of God, and wishing to be saved, unless we give up everything we know to be wrong." I said, "I am very glad to hear you say this. Pray what convinced you of this so strongly?" "Oh, sir, what you told us of Rebecca Dennis in your sermon in our workhouse chapel, the Sunday night after she died, *how she had to choose between God and the man, and that it was not till she had given up the man that she had any peace.* Oh! I have never forgotten it, nor have hardly any of us who heard it. We have often, often talked about it since. No, sir, you may depend upon what I say—*some of us have never been the same in our minds since, and we shall think of Rebecca Dennis to our dying day!*"

And this was all resulting from what seemed at the first a blind errand and a miserable failure!

Oh, my God, give me, I pray Thee, the spirit of a little child; let me have no will of my own; let me be glad to follow just how and where Thou art pleased to point the way, to work in obscurity and without apparent success, if such be Thy will, and to leave the result to Thee! Only increase my faith, enlarge my charity, and in Thine own way, and for Thy own glory, save the souls of poor sinners, for whom Thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was content to die!

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